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p 29



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**RUDYARD KIPLING**







RUDYARD KIPLING

*(From a photograph by E. O. HOPPÉ)*



# RUDYARD KIPLING

## A CHARACTER STUDY

*LIFE, WRITINGS AND LITERARY LANDMARKS*

By R. THURSTON HOPKINS.

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A collection of biographical facts, reminiscences, anecdotes, and opinions of his favorite works, very informing, with much in the way of appreciation to delight the Kipling-lover. Appended are lists of portraits, cartoons and magazine articles, as well as burlesques, parodies and extracts from contemporary sources. It is rather expensive, and has been criticized as being less a well worked out biographical study than a "rich mine of material [for] those who will later write Kipling's biography."

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## PREFACE

WHEN a man has read once, or twice, or three times, through Rudyard Kipling's books, he will probably dip into them here and there at intervals. By so doing he gradually makes his own notebook on this author; but it may be that he will yet find a place for another man's "Kipling commonplace book," even if it has no pretension to completeness or authority. The following pages are intended to furnish a popular guide to the attitude and writings of Rudyard Kipling. My original purpose when the book was first discussed with my publisher was to have confined the pages to a brief outline of the author's works. But I had not been engaged long on the book before it dawned upon me that in speaking of any one of the author's books it is always necessary to say a good deal about the author as a man. When a man is recognized as our first story-teller and at the same time as a poet who has appealed to every kind of Englishman, from the illiterate pioneer to those who represent the finest culture of our country, he becomes a heritage of the people, and we are entitled to gather together as much information about his life and ideas as may be possible. This task has not been easy, for Rudyard Kipling has written of all he has seen during his residence or travels in five continents. He has absorbed India. Man and beast, native and white, have been touched upon with his unmatched picturesque style.

It will be long ere the final opinions on Kipling can be collected. Of late years he has started to restrict

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output, but the works he has given to the public show clearly he is not a man of yesterday or to-day alone—he is also a man of the days to be. Kipling is a second-rate genius, which is putting him about as high up as possible, for the reader must remember that there never has been a first-rate genius this side of the “great divide.” A first-rate genius is always a dead one. The man with the scythe is the only fellow who can grant the superior degree. Since 1886 he has been writing with an unapproachable power of intense visualisation of all he has seen :

*In extended observation of the ways and works of man  
From the Four Mile Radius roughly to the plains of Hindustan,*

and, naturally, he cannot always write well ; but if the good things he has put forth were collected in one volume it would form a book twice the size of the good writings of Charles Lamb. But there is so much envy and meanness among the living, that Kipling will not be fairly rated until he has been dead fifty years, and I do not suppose that he is at all anxious to compete for his final degree just yet. Kipling does not pretend to be a saint ; he is perfectly natural, as any really sensible man must be, and his advice is :

*Stand to your work and be wise—certain of sword and pen,  
Who are neither children nor gods but men in a world of men !*

But you and I do not have to decide whether this man is right or wrong. Time, the old gipsy man, takes that task out of our hands, and he has in the past cultivated a habit of reversing the judgment of the lower courts of contemporaneity. The author has deserved well of his country—firstly for those strong true tales which have made India a real place to dwellers in our “tight little island.” This was in itself an imperial conquest. Marion



"IF——" *From the standpoint of a Yachtsman.*  
"If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue."



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Crawford and other novelists had told us that there was such a land as India. Mr. Anstey humorously explained the workings of the Hindoo mind, and Phil Robinson gave us a book of Eastern beasts and birds, but it was Kipling who took the soil of India and moulded it into a thousand gleaming sentences; he was the first to give the stay-at-home a picture of the real India.

I must especially thank those people—many absolute strangers—who have taken such interest in this book and so courteously written, mentioning numerous points and offering suggestions.

Much information, which is almost entirely the result of original research, is contained in an article by Adrian Margaux in the *Captain* (April 1907), and to this I am indebted for the outline of my chapter dealing with Kipling's schooldays. The present volume, which is the third edition of this work, represents an effort to compress within a modest compass additional notes on Rudyard Kipling's writings between January 1916 and September 1921. Two chapters, "Kipling's London Days" and "The Soul of Sussex" are entirely new. Notes and critical comments have been added throughout this edition, and the following items have been included: Kipling's *Odyssey* (volume of letters published 1920); Kipling's early days in India; Notes on a curious and interesting unpublished MS. written by the author at an earlier date than any of his published work; Air Commodore Maitland of H.M.A. R34 and Kipling's story, "The Night Mail"; W. E. Henley attempts to improve on Kipling's "Tomlinson"; a Kipling letter on the "Ballad of East and West," and Notes on a pen-and-ink drawing of Kipling assisting at a Bazaar in 1891.

A series of clever drawings which interpret Kipling's poem "If—" from the standpoint of a yachtsman, are here reproduced with the consent of the Editor of *Yachting Monthly*. Mr. Arthur Bartlett Maurice has



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generously allowed me to use some of his photographs from an article on Kipling's London in the *Bookman*, January 1921, and much information in my new chapter "Kipling's London Days" has been gleaned from the same source.

\* \* \* \* \*

Lying before me as I write is a copy of the "Five Nations." Every page contains annotations in a bold and free script, as of one accustomed to the pen. It was given to me by a man who served with me in the Yeomanry way back in 1900. I met him again on the troop-deck of the old *Archimedes*, in which, with a thousand other men, I was crossing to Havre to the Great Adventure in 1916. That night the sea and wind rose, and the fog came down as we slipped stealthily through the haggard night. I remember the sea mist chilled our bones, and we huddled together for warmth where long lean rats scurried over us, until my friend switched on his electric lamp, and pulled out this tattered copy of the "Five Nations." He lent it to me that night, and begged me to return it to him when I had read his notes on the poems. But I have it here beside me, and now it can never be returned. No, I shall not meet my friend again—not till the Final Muster. But I have been looking through the notes, and like the real, white man he was, he has marked the passages which would in most cases be overlooked by the "Man of the World"—passages which contain the tenderness, sympathy and pity which underlie some of Kipling's strange South African War poems. In the margin of the "Chant-Pagan" he has written: "In this poem 'Tommy' has been interpreted as he has never been interpreted before. In the meditations of this illiterate Wanderer we find the '*makings of the soldier soul.*'"

It is my opinion that no other writer has written of soldiers *quite* as Kipling has written of them in the



"IF——"  
"Or walk with Kings—— nor lose the common touch."



## PREFACE

"Five Nations." I do not mean that his soldiers are always true to life. There is a thought too much of the man with the fine literary style in some of them, but others are quite perfect. It is rather in the portrayal of the soldier's feelings, which are always very difficult to bring to light, that he stands quite alone. A soldier may speak in the dialect of the gin-palace or the gutter, and yet be capable of giving us the germ idea of the "Chant-Pagan." Indeed, I have met many of Kipling's soldiers. Again, take "Mary, Pity Woman." Do not worry about poetic diction, but ask yourself, what other writer, who has tackled the subject of the downfall and betrayal of a girl, has done it with half the power, with a tenth part of the true tragedy that is to be found in Kipling's verses. In writing of the transgressions of this soldier and girl, Kipling makes the reader feel that the reader and sinner are one. Of course we do not like to see the negative of our own personality imposed upon the negatives of folk whom we should perhaps describe as "vulgar"; but Kipling forces the comparison upon us. "That thou art," says the Hindu teacher in the Dhama-Pada to his disciple, pointing to a beggar. "That am I," says Kipling, pointing to the common soldier. To him the Colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady are sisters under their skins—each with her small vanities, each with her noble virtues. In this way Kipling traces the thread of affinity through all forms of virtue and wickedness. He finds in that affinity the fundamental oneness of man.

Rudyard Kipling looks upon the world with eyes of a child staring at the marvel of a penny rattle. What is common to the average man is to him the persistent repetition of a miracle. He has learnt well the lesson taught in a vision to St. Peter:

*"It is enough that through Thy Grace  
I saw naught common on Thy Earth."*

## P R E F A C E

What through endless repetition and elbow-familiarity has dulled the sense of the matter-of-fact man causes a steady enhancement of the sense of wonder in Kipling. Merely to live overwhelms him ; the great adventure of intelligence in matter keeps him agape. The familiar things—" the English earth," " Summer's wild wide-hearted Rose," " an ancient Roman tile," " Hobden of the old unaltered blood," a Sussex church, a brook in flood, the soul of a child, a cat on the porch, are all aureoled in mystery. And so he has wrought, in a hundred stories and poems, a world of magic out of the stale miracles we call commonplace.

R. THURSTON HOPKINS.

*September 1921.*

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## INTRODUCTION

TOWARDS the end of the eighties, *Macmillan's Magazine* printed a series of short stories, which were signed by a new and somewhat uncommon name, now familiar wherever the English tongue is spoken. The first of these was a story with a Rabelaisian tang, entitled "The Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney." We have all read the side-splitting pranks of Mulvaney, who stole a palanquin into which he was afterwards bundled while he was in his cups, and carried to Benares with the Queens of India to take part in a great festival. This story and the famous ballad of "East and West" appeared in the same number, and it was obvious to many people that "Yussuf" (the signature over which the poem appeared) and Rudyard Kipling, the writer of the adventures of Mulvaney, were one and the same. The second tale was "The Head of the District," and then people began to talk. The critics cried the new writer's merits or faults from the housetops, the demands for back numbers of *Macmillan's Magazine* grew louder and more insistent at the bookshops, and within a few months all literary London was buying up little paper-covered books from the London agents of Rudyard Kipling's Indian publishers. These were what came to be known as the Allahabad Books, or, more correctly, the Indian Railway Library Series, which were printed by A. H. Wheeler & Co., of Allahabad, in 1888.

For a year or so after this, Rudyard Kipling carried the English public by storm and became the most powerful factor in English literature. His vitality, welling up in

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an unbroken stream throughout a period of thirty years or so, has passed over into twenty-five volumes of verse and prose, each of which is stamped with the hall-mark of genius.

At all events, Kipling has to-day a distinction all his own, a chimney corner all to himself, by virtue of his possessing that personal charm of lettered *bonhomie*, which, when he burst in upon the public, seemed lost to literature, as it was at that time practised. Kipling walked brusquely into the smug presence of respectability, and deftly pulled a handful of straw out of the dummy; but of course that did not constitute his greatness.

It was a world largely composed of would-be literary dandies, and superior persons, into which the young writer entered. Everywhere he found the imitation "style," the pose point of view, the smart, cynical, sophisticated attitude. Besides these literary fops with sweet fawn-like eyes, there were, to be sure, a few men of sterling worth, but they were not voicing any original ideas. That brilliant failure, Oscar Wilde, echoed Flaubert and Huysmans. Dowson stumbled into the tracks of Baudelaire. W. B. Yeats lived in a fairyland of his own, and distilled the pure essence of Celtic folklore. The really great men could have been counted up very quickly: such names as Meredith, Morris, Stevenson, Swinburne, Tennyson, Hardy, spring instantly to mind. But the whole trouble with art and literature at this time was that they were anæmic. They were deficient in red-blood corpuscles. This was true of literature; it was true of music, painting, sculpture, the drama—all the arts. The whole trend of the period was artificial. But few will deny that the period has added some important milestones to the great road of English art and letters. It produced "The Sphinx," "Salome," and "The Ballad of Reading Gaol," with the wonderful lines:

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*Yet each man kills the thing he loves,  
By each let this be heard,  
Some do it with a bitter look,  
Some with a flattering word,  
The coward does it with a kiss,  
The brave man with a sword !*

It produced the flawless little poem "The Land of the Heart's Desire," by Yeats, "A Masque of Dead Florentines," by Maurice Hewlett, the poems of Lionel Johnson, the lyrics of Arthur Symons, and Sir Richard Burton's magnificent version of The Kasidah, which stands alone, "a giant monolith upreared beneath the hoary stars upon the eternal Plain of Ages."

*Do what thy manhood bids thee do, from none but self expect applause ;  
He noblest lives and noblest dies who makes and keeps his self-made laws.*

*All other Life is living Death, a world where none but Phantoms dwell,  
A breath, a wind, a sound, a voice, a tinkling of the camel-bell.*

On the other hand, it also produced as one of its typical artists Aubrey Beardsley, whose designs and so-called illustrations to "Salome" were soaked in sin and unbridled suggestiveness. It was this kind of "art" that first prepared a way for Kipling. The thinking man could not persuade himself that all was well with an age that had such a petty and pallid taste in art and letters.

Readers may remember that, during the time the *Yellow Book* was attracting much attention with Beardsley's sinful women, and fat leering rakes, that breezy and cheerful old weekly, *Punch*, was actively engaged in making game of the posturing of the Æsthetes. We have all felt the charm of Walter Pater and Wilde, and we have all recognised the masterful touch of Beardsley, but when Rudyard Kipling replaced their pallid world of garish limelight with the good honest sunlight, it

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was quite a welcome change. There were moments in the reign of the *Æsthetes*, when it seemed as though the old genial English humour was a thing of the past. But all the time the editor and staff of *Punch* struggled bravely against the swift tide of the New Voluptuousness. It is to the credit of this journal, that its general tone remained unaltered during the period when research among the refuse of the French *Decadents* was such a popular vogue. *Punch* proved that in things dull and nasty there is often much laughter, or, at least, a smile. The comic aspect of the *Yellow Book* craze is revealed in the drawing, "Britannia a la Beardsley," which appeared in *Punch's Almanack* for 1895. But the zenith of the deadly and morbid in literature was reached when Oscar Wilde published his famous story, "The Picture of Dorian Gray."\* This book left the reader with such an uncomfortable impression, that he was compelled to ask whether the book stood within the pale of reasonable subject-matter in literature. There was a vein of freakishness running through the story, which rendered it displeasing to the healthy mind. There was a dwelling on every form of luxury, indulgence, and abnormal sin, which seemed extremely nauseous. The author insisted so much on the morbid and the bizarre in this child of his brain, that he totally neglected the finer spirit. "The picture of Dorian Gray" first appeared on June 20, 1890, in *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*, and its publication created a great sensation. A few months afterwards Lippincott's offered a very different fare to its readers. In January 1891, they published the famous "Light that Failed" number of their magazine. Thus Kipling, sword in hand, entered the tired and degenerate literary world; resolved on forcibly crushing his pallid and anæmic brothers with their petty toys and grimacing symbols, out of which all true life had faded. Kipling was violent, English of the English, and full of the old

\* Published by Messrs. Simpkin, Marshall & Co., Ltd.





BRITANNIA À LA BEARDSLEY

*From Drawing by E. T. REED*



## INTRODUCTION

unruly fires of our Saxon ancestors ; he was the sworn enemy of the sentimental. So little in evidence is the sentimental in "The Light that Failed" that some of the critics pronounced the story as "brutal." Certainly it would be difficult to find such a unique collection of disagreeable people in one book. The woman who looks after Dick and Maisie in the opening chapters is a shrew, Maisie is a dull and selfish girl, and Dick Heldar often allows his vehemence to degenerate into violence. Even Maisie remarked with a shudder, that Heldar's work seemed to "smell of tobacco and blood." But the point we are concerned with here is Kipling's entry into the literary world, so we must revert to the charge of brutality presently.

Above all, Kipling wrote with an almost physical exuberance of strength about the big things of life. His graphic power enabled us to realise the life led by *real* men, from a book. His pages were filled with the language used by soldiers, New England fishermen, men of the navy, gentlemen rovers, Canadian troopers, Australians, and all the members of that vast "legion" that never was "listed." The picturesque oaths of Tommy Atkins starred his early poetry, and they looked very alluring in the cold and matter-of-fact printed page. Such matter caught the eye of the men of the workshop and factory, and it was not unpleasing to the ears of these men to be told that they were the Chosen people of the Lord. It was a new thing to hear a poet hymning a cab-driver, or an illiterate pioneer. Thus Kipling marks, in a measure, the beginning of a new era, since his success in introducing the private soldier, with his simple philosophy and complex personality, did much to broaden the popular taste, and made people bolder, and more independent in their literary likes and dislikes. The age needed such a man. So sweeping was Kipling's triumph, that even among those people who professed nothing but contempt for everything



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but the most abstruse in verse, it was permitted to fearlessly extol the ringing doggerel of the Bard of Empire.

Kipling possesses the Rabelaisian spirit, and this has also helped to give him his vogue. In every age when art has a strong accent, when it displays vigour, inventive power, originality, you can trace part of it back to the Rabelaisian spirit.

The world has always been ready to welcome the strong man. It will even welcome a poor poet of the barrack-room or lower-deck, if he has a lusty air, or to use a gruff Saxon phrase, if he has "guts." The only real aristocracy is the aristocracy of character. Kipling possessed a lusty air, a cocksureness, and certain traces of brutality—the echo of the Berserker rage, in fact—which with his genius quickly gathered about him a world-wide public.

And here one must refer to a dominant figure in the world of literature who encouraged and inspired Kipling. This was William Ernest Henley, editor of the *Scots Observer*, which afterwards became the *National Observer*, and migrated to London. Henley has deserved well of his country—firstly by his poems, and secondly because he was broad-minded enough to be able to appreciate work so widely separate as that offered by Meredith, Hardy, and Kipling. To glance down a list of those whom he welcomed to the pages of his paper, is almost to reckon up a group of the most famous writers of his time. Stevenson printed his fine and fiery outburst in defence of Father Damien in these columns. When *Harper's* objected to a certain part of "Tess of the D'Urbervilles," it appeared in the *National Observer*. This was the scene in which Tess and Alec ride together at night.

When Kipling, failing to find an appreciative editor for his soldier poems, sent Henley "Danny Deever," some verses descriptive of the degradation and hanging

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of a British Tommy, he received word back that the editor would take as much of "that sort of stuff" as he could get. I think I am not far out in saying that few papers at that time would have looked twice at the "Barrack Room Ballads." However, they all appeared in Henley's paper, also "The Flag of England," that fine piece of invective, "Cleared," on the finding of the Parnell Commission; also a singular poem, "The Blind Bug," which Kipling later touched up and used as memorial verses in the honour of Mr. Wolcott Balestier.

Henley distributed eulogy or abuse liberally, and from the first he laughed at and attacked in turn the strained and fantastic work of Wilde and the *Æsthetes*. He wrote a scathing editorial review on "The Ballad of Reading Gaol," in the *Outlook*, on March 5, 1898, which I think was his last attack on Wilde. This attack was perhaps rather petty; it seemed too much like hitting a man when he was down. Writing to Leonard Smithers, regarding this review, Wilde said: "I don't think I should answer Henley. I think it would be quite vulgar. What does it matter? He made his scrofula into *vers libres*, and is furious because I have made a sonnet out of 'skilly.' He is simply jealous." This sorrowful effort at humour strikes a note distinctly different from the delightful and witty humour of "The Importance of Being Earnest."

Towards the end of his career Wilde saw that the æsthetic movement was as cold and dead as those black granite sphinxes at the Louvre, which had cast spells over him in his youth. He knew that the public would not tolerate another "Dorian Gray," and we may well assume that in his last poem he was greatly influenced by the style of Kipling. "The Ballad of Reading Gaol" is an entirely different piece of work from any he had produced previously. The whole spirit of this ballad lies in its crude realism, and Kiplingesque robustness.

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The bookworm, on reading Kipling's letters to the *Pioneer* on Japan (afterwards published in "From Sea to Sea"), will note the influence of Lafcadio Hearn. Yet in spite of small borrowings here and there, how inviolate Kipling keeps his own characteristics and power! Another influence on his prose, and one for which we have his own word, is that of his literary brother, Loti. It must have been rather the stimulus of contrast than that of similarity that he found here.

Kipling's literary judgments are as capricious and biased as his political views. A mental gipsy, he has tarried in many and various camping grounds. But he has never tarried over long, and when the fancy has prompted him he has moved on never to return again. Browning, Swinburne, Hearn, Rossetti, Lindsay Gordon, and many older writers abode with him for a season. Then there is the greatest influence of all—the Bible; but plagiarism in that quarter is a virtue.

On the whole it must be admitted that Kipling has moved more people throughout the Empire than any other living poet. I think he is more himself in verse than in prose; his touch seems surer, and his style is at its best and his greater individuality and dignity. When you have cast aside from his verse all jingoism and thin thoughts—and it is difficult to do this, for all his ideas are clothed in gorgeous language—a vivid sense of power and rare imaginative qualities remain. We expect people to disagree over his extreme Tory views, but leaving all political opinion out of the question, most people will be ready to admit that Rudyard Kipling can write poetry when he likes. Of course arguments as to whether certain lines are true poetry or not, generally end in a literary brawl. Wordsworth could find no higher praise for a Keats poem than to call it "a pretty piece of barbarism." And all poets from Homer to Horace, from Catullus to Omar, from Shakespeare to Byron, from Burns to Poe, have been equally complimentary about

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each other. Poe's verse was challenged, and his credentials were grudgingly inspected by those who represented the finest culture of his own country. Everything new is regarded with suspicion and dislike by the public, and often by the leading critics as well. Wordsworth and Coleridge were derided. Shelley, believed in by Byron and Peacock, was regarded as a pariah of literature. Keats staggered and reeled under the whips of the Scotch reviewers, but he made his answer. That answer is "St. Agnes' Eve." Rossetti and Morris were attacked from all sides. Such are the caprices of fate in the lives of many of the "accursed race of poets!"

Kipling, however, from the first enjoyed an Empire-wide recognition, which flowed in with such force that it swept before it all the barriers of hostile criticism. The critic who had climbed to the housetop to heap coals of fire on the "Indian Drummer's" head, found himself without an audience, and had to gracefully slide down the waterspout. It was whispered about the market-place that Kipling was receiving large sums of money for his verse. That a poet should expect to make a living by writing poetry was a comic notion. People refused to believe that such a miracle could be performed in these matter-of-fact times. It had been looked upon as a dreadful trade—like looking for English gold in London gutters. That the people know exactly what they want, and that they do not want verse (save in exceptional cases), is one of the everyday texts of the publishing world. In fact, Mr. T. W. H. Crosland's famous parody of Kipling's "Tommy" sums up with delightful humour the attitude of the publisher to the poet :

*I went into a publisher's as woeful as a bearse,  
The publisher he ups and says, "Why will you chaps write verse?"  
The girl behind the Remington she tittered fit to die.  
I outs into the street again and to myself says I :*



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*" O it's verses this, and verses that, and writing 'em is wrong ;  
But it's ' special type and vellum ' when you hit on something strong,  
You hit on something strong, my boys, you hit on something strong,  
O it's ' signed large paper copies,' when you hit on something strong.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*" We ain't no 'eavenly Miltons, nor we ain't no idiots too,  
But plodding men with fam'lies, and a pile to make, like you ;  
And all the time you see us down-at-heel and looking weak,  
We're a-casting of our bread upon the waters, so to speak :*

*" For it's verses this, and verses that, and things run pretty rough,  
But there's Albert Gate in verses if you only write the stuff,  
If you only write the stuff, my boys, if you only write the stuff,  
O it's yachts and rows of houses if you only write the stuff."*

Yes, certainly Kipling had " hit on something strong," and his rise to the heights of popularity was as sudden as that of Byron. The "boom" which followed can only be compared in its area, length of duration, and significance to that of a famous forerunner, Charles Dickens.

It cannot be denied that Kipling wrought a change in the literary spirit of the age. In one of his later novels, "The Whirlpool," the late George Gissing said of the new school:

It's the voice of the reaction. Millions of men, natural men, revolting against the softness and sweetness of civilization—men all over the world, hardly knowing what they want, and what they don't want.

But Gissing was wrong when he remarked that they did not know what they wanted—they knew, but it was something with which this writer had little sympathy. The revolt against the æsthetic movement was not a revolt against "the softness and sweetness of civilization." It was a blow at the sickly fancies of those artists and writers who drank absinthe in the Cheshire Cheese, and strove to shock a sturdy public with the *Yellow Book* and *The Savoy*. They revolted less against the mild

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and gentle life than against the unwholesome and effeminate life. The sound ideas underlying the revolt are set out by Rudyard Kipling in "The Light that Failed," and wrought into the fabric of his great romance "Kim"—which is a story, realistic in form and yet romantic in spirit. There are brief and exquisite prose sketches in "Kim" which remind the reader, strangely enough, of Oscar Wilde. A healthier Wilde, with a broader vision and an outlook more clearly English, might have written a great Indian romance like "Kim." But reserve is necessary to great artistic expression, and this Wilde lacked. It is reserve that wins, not bombast; for soul is greater than sound. That is why the spiritual quietude of "Kim" will outlive the brazen "go" and lively colour of the greater part of Kipling's work. Many of his tales are too snappish, too knowing, and too violent to afford any lasting pleasure to the human soul. The victories of violence are transient.

Kipling is certainly one of the least monotonous of writers. He is ever experimenting in new styles and subjects; and, in addition to winning a high place in the literature of the half-exotic Indian romance, he has obtained an incontestable pre-eminence as a short story-teller and expert in modern life on land and sea. As I have noted before, a similar subtlety of method and a certain delicacy of touch, not wholly unlike the poetic style of Lafcadio Hearn, mark his best work. In other respects he recalls Pierre Loti to our minds.

Both Kipling and Lafcadio Hearn are keen observers, distinguished from the minor novelists of the same group by the abundance and vividness of picturesque detail with which they describe strange people and lands. But how different are the characters in Hearn's tales when compared to those of Kipling! The two writers exhibit equal imaginative power in revealing the glamour of the East in its opposite aspects. Kipling employs

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realistic means in poetic effects when describing the pageantry of Oriental life. But Hearn uses rhythmic phrases and ornate diction even in dramatic situations, and he discovers many of the spiritual forces of Eastern life which Kipling has missed. For Hearn, art was the soul of all things ; in fact he was suffering from a certain mental hysteria which craved perfection in art. We are told that he devoted all his days and years to the pursuit of the beautiful, and he quoted Kipling to accentuate this point :

*One minute's work to thee denied  
Stands all Eternity's offence—*

According to Hearn nothing was less important than worldly success, to work for pelf was nefarious, and Fame was a will-o'-the-wisp that led one on to ruin and corruption. He accepted as a fact that when a man owns more money than he can use, it owns him.

Kipling and Hearn, however, did not exhaust the fairyland of Oriental mysticism, and the field has been again opened up by two other writers with more intimate and varied knowledge of India. The first is F. W. Bain, professor of political economy at Poona, who has introduced us to the Sancho Panza of the Hindoo drama in "A Digit of the Moon," and the other is Rabindranath Tagore, the famous Indian poet. There must be in truth some influence of enchantment in the atmosphere of India. How else can one explain how Mr. Bain has been carried away from the cheerless land of cold science to the abode of the fairy. So I say to Mr. Bain, in the phrase of one of the kings of literature, "What are *you* doing in that galley?" Your place is not with those gloomy people who fret and fume over the laws of mere pelf. It was not from them you drew the inspiration that enabled you to write the Indian version of "As You Like It"—that charming and dramatic romance "A



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Heifer of the Dawn." Yes, I repeat with Molière, "What are you doing in that galley?"

Readers of Tagore will recognise in his poems the influence of Kabir, the poet and mystic of the fifteenth century, who is mentioned in some beautiful verses—"The Song of Kabir"—in "The Second Jungle Book." But Tagore is not an imitator, for he has made a new trackway in the fields of Indian literature; however, as Kabir was the disciple of Ramananda, so is Tagore the disciple of Kabir. Both see the world through God, both see God through the world; both believe that their God is the hot Indian air in their nostrils, and the good earth underfoot. Every idea that Tagore has expressed, is an ardent plea to his people to return to "the mystical religion of love" which makes its appearance in all races of mankind at certain periods of spiritual discipline. It should be pointed out that this "religion of love" is far removed from that doctrine of love which we of the twentieth century claim for ourselves. It is such a strong and deep identification of the man with God, and vivid apprehension of God in all the works of nature, that it would offend the moral sense of Western people. Like much of the work of Richard Jefferies it would be looked upon as very "pagan." To few people and but seldom is it given to feel so utterly alone with God and nature as it has been given to Rabindranath Tagore. In a wonderful poem—a translation of Kabir—Tagore tells of the pantheism of the hills and the sea. It might almost pass for a song of human love:

*The shadows of evening fall thick and deep, and the darkness of love envelops  
the body and the mind.*

*Open the window to the west, and be lost in the sky of love;*

*Drink the sweet honey that steepes the petals of the lotus of the heart.*

*Receive the waves in your body: what splendour is in the region of the sea!*

*Hark! the sounds of conches and bells are rising.*

*Kabir says: "O brother, behold! the Lord is in this vessel of my body!"*

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Not one of the least obligations the world of English letters owes to India is Tagore's versions of the "Songs of Kabir" with all their fire and sonorous music. I do not hesitate to affirm that Tagore has reached a certain impassioned splendour of lyrical genius to which Rudyard Kipling can never hope to reach. In "Kim," and certain of his poems, Kipling sees all India somewhat superficially, in black and white. His vision is physically wonderful, spiritually hasty and arrogant. He blows upon one instrument. But when we come to the poems and plays of Tagore, we find a poet who conducts a wonderful orchestra and deals with the adventures of the soul—sometimes the artless adventure in which the soul is a child playing with the sand, and sometimes in the last and greatest quest in which the soul searches after the Spirit of Truth.

The subject of the stories *behind* Kipling's stories was the theme of an article (February 20, 1920) in the *Bookman's Journal* by the Editor, Mr. W. G. Partington, one time Assistant Editor of the *Bombay Gazette*.

The writer points out that Richard Le Gallienne, in his book "Rudyard Kipling" leaves the inner stories untouched, and "with the omission some of the most interesting phases of the subject—many of them at present matters only of personal controversy and research—are apt to be overlooked. That these 'stories behind the stories' will be the well-spring of a future literature is undoubted."

He goes on to say that in most attempts to deal with Kipling's work there is a very noticeable lack of understanding either of the "atmosphere" or of his material. He adds:

Mr. Kipling's fame rests on the bed-rock of his Eastern work, which will stand out with greater prominence still in the new history of India on which the veil is slowly being raised. It is to the East, then,

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that the biographer must go to secure the true perspective and incidentally much additional information. The "Kipling influence" was tremendous, and there is an interesting field for study in this connection alone. Examples of this "influence" and of "evidence" substantiating his writings come to light every now and then, to be eagerly seized by devotees and critics, and there are perhaps more of such examples to be found than may be imagined. Mr. Kipling has received more than a generous share of attention from critics and worshippers, but the field—and probably the best part of it—has still to be covered.



## CHAPTER I

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John Lockwood Kipling and "Beast and Man in India": Westward Ho and the United Service College: Kipling at Lahore: Kipling's Earthquake: Kipling and the *caravanserais* on the Lahore Fort Road: "Mother Maturin": Indian Fakirs: An apocryphal story concerning R. K.: "All Out" to carve his way to fame: Do-as-you-please life in India: "At the Pit's Mouth": A curious and interesting unpublished MS.: Kipling's association with *The Idler*: "The Night Mail" and the reality of its prophecies.





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BEFORE entering upon this slight study, I think it necessary to recall certain biographical stages that are indispensable to a clear survey of Kipling's literary development. Born at Bombay on December 30, 1865, of English parents, he spent the first few years of his life in that city, and this earliest environment must have stamped itself on the supersensitive child for life. The multitudinous, many-coloured East, filled his soul with a wonder that is still stirring mightily within the man of fifty.

In connexion with his strongly Oriental leanings, it is interesting to note that his father, John Lockwood Kipling, C.I.E., was a great authority on the mythological sculpture of the temples of the Central provinces of India, and the author of a powerful and lucid work on Indian animal life, "Beast and Man in India" (Macmillan and Co., 1891). Attention must also be called to a book of "Verses by a Mother and Daughter" (Elkin Mathews, 1902), which was written by Kipling's mother and sister.

John Lockwood Kipling, one of the pioneers of art education under Government auspices in India, died in 1911, aged seventy-four. He was the eldest son of the Reverend Joseph Kipling of the Wesleyan ministry; and in 1865 he married Alice, daughter of the distinguished Wesleyan preacher—the late Rev. George B. Macdonald. He was appointed architectural sculptor at the Bombay

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School of Art in the year of his marriage, and also acted as the Bombay correspondent of the *Pioneer* of Allahabad. Upon the creation of the Mayo School of Art at Lahore in 1875, he was appointed Principal and Curator of the Central Museum, and filled both posts with singular success. He was created a C.I.E. in 1886, and retired from the service in 1893.

According to the testimony of Mr. Holker, a Lancashire cotton weaver, who had mills at Dharwal, near Lahore, Kipling's father was a very great Oriental scholar. When he visited the Kiplings at Lahore, he was much impressed by the wonderful collection of curios and artistic wonders with which every room simply teemed. He wrote: "The Kipling family were delightful people, all clever and artistic in their tastes, and the kindest and most gracious family I have ever known."

Three different nationalities have gone to make up Rudyard Kipling's complicated nature. On the mother's side, Scotland and Ireland; on the father's, England; though four hundred years back the Kiplings came from Holland. As a child he learnt to speak Hindustani, and his immersion in the myths and creeds of a strange people accounted for his unquenchable love of the "ghostly style," combined with an almost equal love of the "horrible" in literature.

In 1871 Kipling, with a younger sister, was in England under the care of an elderly relative in Southsea. During his stay at Southsea he is generally believed to have tasted of much bitterness, and it seems likely that he was not unmindful of his own case when he wrote the opening chapters of "The Light that Failed," in which two Anglo-Indian children are more or less oppressed in spirit by the repressive creed of a Puritanical woman who is looking after them.

A few years later, after a visit to Paris with his father, he was entered at the United Service College at Westward Ho, North Devon (1878). In "Stalky and Co." he has

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presented a lively and minute sketch of the vigorous life he spent at the College (1878-1882).

To *T.P.'s Weekly* we owe the following story of his schooldays :

Lovers of "Stalky and Co." will remember the description of the school at Westward Ho, with its background of "rabbit woods" and glorious vista of seascape. It was the writer's fortune recently to spend a delightful fortnight at Bideford, some three miles distant from the school, and in many a walk to travel over the scenes immortalized in that book. A favouring planet brought me into conversation with an old rural postman, now pensioned off. Questioned as to the Westward Ho school, he was at once agog with memories. Yes, many a time had he met the boys coming along the cliff-walk from Appledore on their way to the renowned tuck shop on "Bidevoor promenade," and he had enjoyed, and suffered from, many of their pranks, with a description of which he favoured his listener. When a suitable occasion offered, I questioned him more definitely about Kipling, and at once he gave me an account of an incident so entirely in keeping with one's idea of the author that it was impossible to doubt it for a minute. It appears that Beckwith, the aquatic expert, came to Westward Ho to give an exhibition from the pier, which was crowded with the usual summer sightseers and a fair sprinkling of boys from the school. After some evolutions in the water the swimmer commenced a series of diving performances, and it was after a sensational dive from the top of the pier that the spectators were amazed to see a chubby, "stocky" boy run to the edge of the pier and repeat the dive with all the mannerisms of the expert. Inquiry elicited the fact that the boy was named Kipling, and it is by this incident more than any other that the Bideford people remember the now famous author. It may interest many people to know that the school buildings still stand as before, although they are now used as a hotel and boarding-house. One hopes, however, that all traces of the dead cat placed under the floor of the superciliously refined dormitory have been expunged.

An interesting observation that Rudyard Kipling derived his first name from Rudyard Lake, not far from Stoke, in Staffordshire, has been spread broadcast in English and American papers. And in a sketch of Kipling's life, written by Professor Charles Eliot Norton and published in the *Windsor Magazine* for December 1899, it is stated that Kipling's parents "named their firstborn child after the pretty lake on the borders of

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which their acquaintance had begun." This biographical sketch was written for a popular American edition of Kipling's works, and it is rather curious that this statement should be allowed by Kipling in this case to stand, and yet be categorically denied by him a few years later.

Kipling's disclaimer came as a surprise, the original story being so circumstantial. But in a letter to a provincial journal he stated that it was all a beautiful dream and not a "pretty whim" of his aunt, Lady Burne-Jones, who, when her sister, Mrs. Lockwood Kipling, wrote from India announcing the birth of a son, asked that he might be called Rudyard. This repudiation of the story by the famous author was a heavy blow to a society which proposed to develop the lake as a holiday resort for Kipling pilgrims. Once again one is constrained to ask, "How do these pretty legends gain such prominence in the papers?"

At the age of seventeen Kipling returned to India, and through the influence of his father took up a post on the staff of the *Lahore Civil and Military Gazette*. The staff of this journal soon found they had an enthusiast in their midst—a youth bubbling over with enthusiasm, gaiety, and the eternal boyishness of genius. Those who have written about Kipling's early days in India seem to me to give insufficient prominence to his gaiety and enthusiasm. It was his cardinal quality in those days. Of his child-like mirth and laughter-loving moods Mr. Kay Robinson has written :

Kipling, shaking all over with laughter and wiping his spectacles at the same time with his handkerchief, is the picture which always comes to my mind as most characteristic of him in the old days when even our hardest work on "The Rag"—for fate soon took me to Lahore to be his editor—was as full of jokes as a pomegranate of pips. Of all our journalistic feats we had most reason to be proud of our earthquake.

This earthquake occurred at about 2.30 a.m. ~~See~~ Sunday morning. In those days the Saturday paper, dated Monday, according to Anglo-Indian practice—for at all the stations the native newsboys offer you always "To-morrow's paper, Sahib"—used to go to press in the small



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hours of Sunday morning to catch the Bombay and Calcutta mail trains. It was always practically finished by midnight, and only one page remained "open" for telegrams. On this occasion we had spent the hours from midnight till half-past two at the club, which was emptied by that time of revellers, and returned to the bungalow, when we both noticed a slight tremor as of an earthquake, so in went a brief paragraph in the paper, announcing a "slight earthquake" at Lahore. Not another soul in any part of the Punjab or India felt that earthquake, and the Government observatory knew nothing of it. It was our own private and special earthquake, and we treasure its memory. After the last English earthquake Kipling wrote :

This here English journalism isn't what it's cracked up to be. They can't have an earthquake in England without taking up two columns of the *Times*. . . . Now, I remember the time when you and I could just make an earthquake, same as the Almighty, slip it into the "local" at 3 a.m. of a Sunday morning, and go to bed with the consciousness we'd done our duty by the proprietors.

Of his newspaper experiences in India Kipling has told us in his short story, "The Man Who Would be King." The office could not have been a bed of roses in those pitchy black nights, when the red-hot wind from the westward was booming among the tinder-dry trees, when, as he tells us :

It was a shade cooler in the press-room than the office, so I sat there while the type ticked and clicked, and the night-jars hooted at the windows, and the all but naked compositors wiped the sweat from their foreheads and called for water.

When he was in his twenty-second year he became assistant editor of the *Pioneer* at Allahabad, and remained in this post from 1887 to 1889. Thus it will be noticed that many of his best short stories were written when he was in his teens, and certain characters in them have since become world famous, notably Mulvaney, Ortheris, and Learoyd.

The King's Dragoon Guards and many other famous regiments then quartered at Rawal Pindi must have passed the headquarters of the *Civil and Military Gazette* on their way to the Delhi manœuvres in 1885, and no

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doubt young Kipling, with his perpetual interest in the spectacle of life, seized upon many ideas for stories and poems from these surroundings. His clear vision, and the energy massed in a torrent sweeping all before it, is manifested in "Plain Tales from the Hills," published in Calcutta, 1888. Of these forty short stories, twenty-eight made their first appearance in the *Civil and Military Gazette*. As early as 1886 his name was well known in India.

A very curious and interesting unpublished MS., written by Kipling thirty-seven years ago, throws some light on the difficulty the author met with in getting his work before the public. The following is a description of this important early MS., earlier in date than any of his published stories, and it is noteworthy that Kipling, the extremely crafty and careful man of letters, should have once had to invoke the aid of a second person to "improve" his story and get it published.

At the Pit's Mouth : Personal Recollections of . . . translated from his Diary by R. K., 7 pp. small 4to and 5 pp. 8vo., 12 pp. in all, 1884 ; written for the most part in two parallel columns, that on the right hand containing the Story, headed "Personal Narrative," that on the left, under the heading of "Digressions," being instructions and suggestions to the party to whom the MS. was sent for its improvement and enlargement before publication ; in these notes Mr. Kipling explains the character of the two people in the story ; one paragraph is headed "Note by the Editor," and the Editor is supposed to "translate" the "Journal." One of the "Digressions" consists of a "Note" by "Agnes Festin," the lady in the story, on the man in the story ; this is purposely written in a disguised "female" hand ; another Note reads, "Work this up to any extent, in the style of Mrs. Oliphant's *Beleaguered City*" ; another reads, "Embroider this as much as you will, also the scene later on, where they dance at the Benmore Ball and flirt in the balconies, R.K." ; the end note is headed "Summary by the Translator."

Part of the MS. and a few blots on the first page are written in red ink, which we are informed was intended to represent blood, but which the writer speaks of as "some fluid," "possibly wine."

The following is the history of this curious MS.—Mr. Kipling was at the time engaged on an Indian paper, and after writing the Story gave it to a lady author, to "embroider" and get published.

With the MS. are 3 letters signed by Mr. Kipling (body of letters



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typed), dating from Nov. 24th, 1911, to Dec. 18th, 1914, addressed to the same lady, in answer to her application for permission to publish the story, in which he says "I cannot recall the MS., but I do not see my way to give permission for the publication of work written by me more than a generation ago . . . If . . . it would be convenient to you to dispose of the MS. at this moment I will . . . send you a cheque in exchange." The other letters show that the lady wanted to interview Mr. Kipling, and that he avoided doing so—a further letter from his secretary says that he is away from home. Another letter is included from a friend who writes "R. K. gave you the MS. with intent that you should use it for publication. He means immediate publication, and not after many years"—etc.

Seven pages of the MS. have a small round hole, burnt purposely (we are informed) by the end of a cigarette, and also two small pieces cut out, rendering a few words defective, and 4 of the pages are slightly defective at the corners.

The tenour of the Story is that a man falls in love with a married woman ; the day before the proposed elopement, the man dreams that they both meet with a fatal accident : in the dream they are able to watch their own dead bodies (which are very fully described) carried away, and listen to their friends' discussion on the accident, *cum multis aliis*.

On one of the pages are two small diagrams to illustrate the "bank" on Simla Mall where the accident occurred.

Mr. E. K. Robinson, who was formerly Kipling's editor at Lahore, contributed to *McClure's Magazine* (July, 1896) an interesting paper giving his reminiscences of his famous assistant. The friendship dated back for ten years, and when he first met Kipling he was not particularly impressed by his appearance, but he draws attention to the fact that he was even then a brilliant conversationalist. Mr. Robinson says that he conversed in a somewhat jerky manner, and his movements were rather sudden and eccentric ; this, added to a stoop acquired through much bending over the office desk, did not give one a very favourable impression. But those who worked with him had noticed his sterling traits, and were impressed by a light which flashed behind the spectacles. It was a light that was suggestive of a good deal of power and sterling character. He was an untiring worker, and slaved industriously at the drudgery of the newspaper work without protest.

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There was one peculiarity of Kipling's work which I really must mention, namely, the amount of ink he used to throw about. In the heat of summer, white cotton trousers and a thin vest constituted his office attire, and by the day's end he was spotted all over like a Dalmatian dog. He had a habit of dipping his pen frequently and deep into the inkpot, and as all his movements were abrupt, almost jerky, the ink used to fly. When he darted into my room, as he used to do about one thing or another in connexion with the contents of the paper a dozen times in the morning, I had to shout to him to "stand off"; otherwise, as I knew by experience, the abrupt halt he would make and the flourish with which he placed the proof in his hand before me, would send the penful of ink—he always had a *full* pen in his hand—flying over me. Driving, or sometimes walking, home to breakfast in the light attire plentifully besprinkled with ink, his spectacled face peeping out under an enormous mushroom-shaped pith hat, Kipling was a quaint-looking object.

It may be said that Kipling was a born nomad in search of wisdom, and it must be added that he occasionally stumbled upon that quality in outlandish nooks and corners. By the road, carpeted with the fine white dust of thousands of camels and horses, which leads from the Fort at Lahore across the River Ravi, there are numerous *caravanserais*, and the foul smells which rise from them are some of the most loathsome in the East—something between the reek of the Mohammedan Quarter in Jerusalem and the smell of a Chinese village. But Kipling's insatiable craving for knowledge at the age of twenty led him through dubious byways, and he would often be found in these pestiferous khans with travellers from Bokhara and Badakshan, drinking in their weird tales, and taking notes for that remarkable tale of native life, "Mother Maturin," which he was then planning. He had related to some of his friends in a convincing manner the germ-idea of this book, but it was never completed. In 1886 Kipling had 350 foolscap pages of its manuscript in a "bruised tin box," but what became of it is a mystery.

Under a peepul tree overhanging a well by the Fort road squatted daily a ring of almost naked fakirs, hideously smeared with paint. Here the European could for a few small coins witness some of the tricks

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of Indian jugglers—tricks that were little short of marvellous. One of their favourite “stunts” was swallowing rough iron balls about an inch in diameter. The fakir swallowed one, and its downward progress could be noted by the round lump which rippled along the outside of his throat. Then he would swallow a second iron “pill,” but the ball would stick half-way down. However, the third followed, and the fakir, after dancing in a frenzied manner, would take a bound into the air, landing sharply on his feet and making the three balls click as they came into contact with each other. The painful ordeal of forcing the balls up his throat again is too disgusting to describe, and was a most distressing sight. Should any European get too inquisitive over the method of the fakirs in their magic he would be met with silence and cold suspicion, for they never explained their tricks. However, when Kipling arrived there was, if he desired it, a place in the fakirs’ enclosure, and any information he asked for was willingly given. Kipling had wonderful insight into the singular manners and customs of Eastern life, and all the sorcery of the religious mendicants was an open book to him. I am at this point reminded of the story of how Kipling performed the famous Indian needle trick. Of course, he has no way of protecting himself from being forcibly made sponsor for anecdotes; and the reader is cautioned against accepting this one which passed the rounds of the Indian Press. However, I give it for what it is worth.

A young lady admirer, it seems, was discussing the marvels of Indian jugglers with R. K. at a bazaar in aid of charity at Lahore. “But,” she cried, “it is all trickery, and anyone with a sharp eye could discover their tricks with ease.” Thereupon Kipling asked for a packet of needles, and taking up half a dozen, swallowed them (or appeared to do so), and then followed them with a length of silk thread, the end of which remained between his lips. He pulled the thread, and out it came threaded

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through the eyes of the needles. The young lady looked from R. K. to the needles dangling on the thread in amazement.

He smiled pleasantly and drawled out: "Now don't you give the secret of that trick away." The fakirs taught me that, and they don't like their magic explained to the infidels."

In 1888 we gather that Kipling was going "all out" to write something that should make his name talked of in London. Let us see what he says of himself at this date in his introduction to the first edition of "In Black and White." This is a side-light on Kipling which has apparently been overlooked by the majority of readers. As it will be remembered, the introduction is supposed to be from the pen of Kadir Baksh, Kipling's native factotum. We learn from him that it was the custom of the *Sahib* to write far into the night. So R. K. was burning the midnight oil at the age of twenty-two! But it is doubtful if all his fame and wealth have ever purchased anything better than the peculiar magic of those early days in India when he was living the delightfully do-as-you-please life of the literary cub. This, too, was the great creative period of his life, and, so far as literary finish is concerned, "Plain Tales from the Hills" leaves little to be acquired. Rudyard Kipling at twenty-two had shown all the tricks in the wizard's cabinet, and in "Plain Tales" the work is almost as crafty and varied as anything that afterwards came from their author's pen. So here was Kipling, urged forward by his intense energy, and exulting in the consciousness of turning out good work, living a delightfully Bohemian existence. The perfect intoxication of the joy of "work for work's sake"—Kipling's chosen text—afterwards led him to enlarge upon this vital and moving theme in the best volume he has written—"The Day's Work." Yes, these were halcyon days—days of happiness, if not of prosperity. Kadir Baksh speaks of his *Sahib's* carelessness



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over the housekeeping and money matters. Young Odin cared for none of these things! There was no bill that could not be honoured with the golden mintage of youth!

I am head of the *Sabib's* household and hold his purse, he says. Without me he does not know where are his rupees or his clean collars. So great is my power over the *Sabib* and the love that he bears to me! Have I ever told the *Sabib* about the customs of servants or black men? Am I a fool? I have said "very good talk" upon all occasions. I have cut always smooth wristbands with scissors, and timely warned him of the passing away of his tobacco that he might not be left smokeless upon a Sunday. More than this I have not done. The *Sabib* cannot go out to dinner lacking my aid. How then should he know aught that I did not tell him? Certainly Nabi Baksh is a liar.

None the less this is a book, and the *Sabib* write it, for his name is in it and it is not his washing-book.

In 1889 Kipling was sent to England by the *Pioneer*, to which he promised to contribute his impressions of travel. He touched Japan, San Francisco, and New York on his way to the mother-country, and his experience may be read in "Letters of Marque" and "From Sea to Sea." In the autumn of this year we find him established in London, where he published "Barrack Room Ballads" a year or so later, of which *The Times* remarked: "Unmistakable genius rings in every line."

Robert Barr, writing in the *Idler* for May, 1909, gives a sidelight on Rudyard Kipling, the young journalist, fighting for position in the London crowd.

Kipling then lived in three rooms on the second floor, at the corner of Villiers Street and the Thames Embankment; and here it was to him that Robert Barr divulged his plans for a new magazine. The young author took to the idea at once, and with that prompt energy which characterised him, he produced pens and paper and started to sketch out a cover for the magazine. We know that Kipling can produce very creditable black and white sketches when he likes. Readers of "Just So Stories" do not need to be told that he is an artist of quite an uncommon order. Although his father was an

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art master by profession, he is said to be quite without any training in this work. "He liked doing things his own way," writes one who knew him at school, "and if he wanted to make a hill square, and cover it with vermilion grass, he would do it." A sketch of "A Tiger's Head," by Kipling, published in the *Strand Magazine*, shows that he could at times observe convention and nature at the same time.

Kipling's sketch for Robert Barr's magazine represented a statue, the real face of which wore a tragic expression, while the mask which the statue held up grinned humorously at the public. Kipling at that time had been burning the midnight oil and generally overworking himself. On his table he had graved the words: "Oft was I weary when I toiled at thee"—the motto which the galley-slave carried on his oar. He told Mr. Barr that as he "worked late, a phantom of himself had formed the disquieting habit of sitting down opposite him at the desk of weariness," and this he "regarded as a sign to knock off." Kipling refused the editorship of the *Idler*, but he contributed the following articles and stories to their journal: "My First Book," "My Sunday at Home," "Primum Tempus," "The Legs of Sister Ursula," "The Ship that Found Herself," and "The Story of Ung."

Robert Barr had a Kipling sea-story in view when he started the series of "Tales of our Coast." They were to start off with Clark Russell and end up with Kipling. Harold Frederic contributed a most striking Irish sea sketch, and "There is Sorrow on the Sea" came from Parker's pen. Eric Mackay wrote a poem to introduce the series which was illustrated by Frank Brangwyn. The third story, "The Roll Call of the Reef," was by "Q." Kipling's story did not arrive in time, but it appeared during the same year, and was illustrated by T. Walter Wilson. Kipling's connexion with this most cosmopolitan magazine must have been a very valuable



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experience, for a galaxy of budding talent had gathered around its ideal editor, Jerome K. Jerome. In the *Idler* such writers as W. W. Jacobs, Anthony Hope, Zangwill, and W. L. Alden, the great American humorist, received welcome admission long before the other journals looked upon their work as "valuable copy."

A long voyage to South Africa, Australia, Ceylon, and New Zealand took up most of his time in 1891, and when he returned he met Wolcott Balestier, a young American author belonging to a family well known in the literary circles of New York. At the same time he became acquainted with Balestier's sister, Caroline, whom he married in 1892. During the years 1892-1896 the young couple made their home at Brattleboro, Vt., U.S.A., which gave Kipling the chance to gather the information about the New England fishermen, which he uses in "Captains Courageous." "Many Inventions," the "Jungle Books," and certain poems in "The Seven Seas" were also written or planned there.

In 1896 Kipling again came to England, and he settled at Rottingdean in 1898. He went on a cruise with the navy in the home waters in 1897, and again in 1898, giving his notes on the trips in "A Fleet in Being," which appeared in the *Morning Post*. In 1900 he was with his beloved troops in South Africa, and was present with Bennet Burleigh on March 29, during the fight at Karree Siding. He also acted as an associate editor of the *Friend*, a Bloemfontein journal edited by the war correspondents with Lord Roberts' troops. He wrote for this paper "King Log and King Stork" (March 24, 1900), "The Elephant and the Lark's Nest" (March 26, 1900), "The Persuasive Pom-Pom," "Vain Horses," and other items. "A Song of the White Man," which Julian Ralph states in "War's Brighter Side" \* was written to be read at a dinner in Canada, appeared in the issue of April 2, 1900.

\* Published in 1901 (Pearson).

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Of the later incidents of Kipling's career there is little need to write ; they have been brought before the notice of the public by the Press of England and America with unflinching regularity.

Let one fact be noted, that Kipling has done as much as any man to encourage and interest the nation in dirigibles and aeroplanes, and perhaps his story, "The Night Mail," is much more than a mere scrap of fiction. In any case, one cannot help being profoundly impressed by the reality of its prophecies. In this story the reader is enabled to realise the very same "atmosphere" of Aerial Liner travel that the men of the R34 dirigible experienced during their journey to America and back. Air-Commodore E. M. Maitland has written in his log of the journey that he read "The Night Mail" fifty times, and every time he read it he was amazed at the exactness of Kipling's technical comments. In such a story as this Kipling has created the undersong of the huge airship's engines, and we know that his machinery is alive and perfect in his eyes. His story is so charged with the whiff of petrol that it seems the least important thing about him that he should be a literary man. In a footnote to his "Log of H.M.A. R34" (Hodder & Stoughton) Air Commodore Maitland remarks the story was written in 1909, and in it Kipling "chose Trinity Bay as the point where his westward-bound aerial liner of the future first strikes land." Then, ten years later, when the first aircraft did actually cross the Atlantic from East to West, the land was first sighted at this same Trinity Bay. In a letter to Air Commodore Maitland, Kipling wrote : "There was not anyone who was more earnestly and unbrokenly interested while your voyage was under way ; and if I had only known any saint who could have been trusted with the direction of our higher atmospheric interests at that time, I should have besieged him with offerings."

## CHAPTER II

### KIPLING AT SCHOOL

The *United Services' College Magazine* : Kipling's school poems : The author's first Empire verses : Kipling and the college Literary Society : His opinions on the use of alcohol : Tennyson's "Defence of Lucknow" : Bret Harte's "Concepcion de Arguello" : Kipling's short-sightedness a handicap in athletic competitions : Not a favourite with other boys : A visit to the old school : "Hints on Schoolboy Etiquette," by Kipling.



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No part of a famous man's career has quite the same fascination as the days of his youth and obscurity, when he is groping blindly towards the brilliant future which, although he probably does not dream of it, awaits him; and, in the case of Rudyard Kipling, this period of eclipse is all the more interesting as he has presented part of it to the public in his vividly boyish series of stories, "Stalky and Co."

A perusal of this volume leaves no doubt in the mind of the reader that Master Gigadibs, the sportive Beetle, with his gig-lamps and a craving to write a "simply lovely poem," is a picture of the author during his days at the now famous West Country school. A writer's best stories are always in part autobiographical. In "The Light that Failed" we cannot help assuming that Dick Helder is reconstructed from Kipling's inner consciousness, and in "Stalky and Co." and "Kim" we find the texture of the author's mind and the labyrinth of his heart manifested with the exactness of an analyst. Beetle, the Bard in "Stalky and Co.," with his bright, clean touch and the clever schoolboy's wit, is always and ever Rudyard Kipling, the Bard of Empire.

How much of this book is autobiography, and how much is drawn from the limpid springs of the writer's imagination, give rise to a somewhat perplexing question. Some light on this matter is to be gained from the columns of the *United Services' College Magazine*, which

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was issued during the years that the Three Incomprehensibles waged war with the "Ancients of the College," which was from 1878 to 1882. A set of this immature little magazine realized the sum of £130 at a London auction-room some years ago. And I am told that this set and another one in the library of the College—which now has been transplanted to Harpenden, in Hertfordshire—are the only two known. However, much that is disguised in "Stalky and Co." may be cleared up by examining the pages of the *College Magazine*. In the first place, it is not as difficult to keep company with Stalky and his boy companions after a perusal of the little volume, for although we all admire Kipling's story, in a measure it is rather hard to agree with some of the proceedings of Stalky, Beetle, and McTurk. It must be admitted that these youths followed a code of ethics not always consistent with the honour of self-respecting English schoolboys, and that they were not specially inspired by any of that *esprit de corps*, and sense of responsibility, which is such a dominant note in most of Kipling's work. But impressions produced by the brutality and heartlessness of Stalky and his friends are somewhat toned down by the more refined and happy atmosphere of the author's *Alma Mater*, as reflected in the school journal. In the book, Master Gigadibs seems to be only happy when baiting his master, or acting as lampooner for his Uncle Stalky. But we find many snatches of verse from his pen in the pages of the magazine which are surcharged with humour and *bon-homie*. In the book we read of the wild antics in a pantomime played by Stalky and other boys; in the magazine, we find that the performance was really quite a creditable rendering of *The Rivals*, in which Kipling acted the part of Sir Anthony. Beetle seems to waste a good deal of time in retreat in his lair in the furze bushes, waiting for the cat that walked once too often by himself, to twine like a giddy honeysuckle above the heads of



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those who had incurred the wrath of the heroic trio. But we read nothing in the book about the time he spent whilst forming the College Literary and Debating Society. The Beetle was its founder and also the first secretary. I should add that the Natural History Society, which was treated with such contempt by Stalky and Co., and referred to as "The Bughunters," received the liberal assistance of the magazine during the years 1881-2, which covers the period of Kipling's editorship. The "old rag," or the *Swillingsford Patriot*, as Stalky had christened it, received but scant attention in the book. It is mentioned in the last chapter, in which Beetle goes to Randall's printing office accompanied by his *confrères* to correct proofs. The printing office of the magazine can still be seen under the name of Wilson and Sons in Mill Street, and Mr. Raven Hill, who made a special study of the local colour of the district, devoted a full-page drawing to Beetle at work on the proofs in the little loft behind the shop. Beneath this drawing were quoted the words: "He saw himself already controlling the *Times*." Raven Hill's illustrations to "Stalky and Co." in the *Windsor Magazine* in 1899 should be in the hands of all true Kiplingites; to cut them out of the story in book form was a great mistake, and it is to be hoped that in a future edition they will be reproduced.

It is, of course, the fact, that Kipling edited six numbers of the school magazine that has given them their fancy price. The first effort from his pen made its appearance in the issue of June 30, 1881, under the title of "A Devonshire Legend," and I make no doubt that two other articles came from the same pen, "Life in the Corridor" and "Concerning Swaggers." It will be recalled that the college corridor is mentioned several times in "Stalky and Co."

Some of the efforts are headed "By Rxxxxt Bxxxxxxg," and it will be noticed that Kipling has closely modelled

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several of his early poems on Browning, but as Mr. Adrian Margaux remarked in an article in the *Captain*,\* “the subjects would hardly have commended themselves to the Browning Society.” I must not fail, however, to draw attention to “The Jampot,” which is delightfully droll. It tells of a fight by two boys for a pot of jam, which was smashed to shivers during the contest :

*But neither of us shared  
The dainty—That’s your plea?  
Well, neither of us cared,  
I answer . . . Let me see  
How have your trousers fared?*

The young Kipling thus delivered himself on a college edict prohibiting the use of stoves for cooking in the studies :

*The cup is devoid of its coffee,  
The spoon of its sugary load,  
The tablecloth guiltless of toffee,  
And sorrow has seized my abode.*

*Our tasks they are as dry as the sea-sands,  
Our throats they are drier than these,  
No cocoa has moistened our weasands,  
We taste not of Teas.*

On the occasion of the last attempt on the life of Queen Victoria, Kipling contributed a poem entitled “Ave Imperatrix” to the magazine (March, 1882). This is the first example of that end-of-the-nineteenth-century Imperialism to which he has given full and final expression :

*Such greeting as should come from those  
Whose fathers faced the Sepoy hordes,  
Or served you in the Russian snows,  
And, dying, left their sons their swords.*

\* “Famous Men at School,” by Adrian Margaux (the *Captain*).

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*And all are bred to do your will  
By land and sea—wherever flies  
The flag, to fight and follow still  
And work your Empire's destinies.*

There are some interesting notes on the "Literary Society" which was founded in 1881 by Kipling in the college chronicle. They throw many sidelights on the school life. The first meeting was called to consider the proposition: "that a classical is superior to a mathematical education." Kipling spoke in the negative. The next time that his name is mentioned we read that he was in favour of a resolution which affirmed the "Advance of the Russians in Central Asia to be hostile to the British Power." Another notice records that Kipling moved a vote of censure against Mr. Gladstone's Government. This "vote" was carried by a sweeping majority, but it is rather astonishing to find that Beresford—the veritable "Uncle Stalky" of the Stalky Book—was one of the opposing speakers. We can imagine Beetle's glance of cold scorn when he met the eye of the "Stalky one" who, no doubt, took up that attitude to annoy "Master Gigadibs." Kipling's last speech was in support of a resolution "that total abstinence is better than the moderate use of alcohol." But the teetotalers were defeated in the end.

I do not think that Kipling is a total abstainer, and certainly his writings have not commended temperance, but after seeing two young men drug two girls with drink at an American concert hall, and lead them reeling home, he became converted to Prohibition. Of this painful scene he has written :

Then, recanting previous opinions, I became a Prohibitionist. Better it is that a man should go without his beer in public places, and content himself with swearing at the narrow-mindedness of the majority ; better it is to poison the inside with very vile temperance drinks, and to buy lager surreptitiously at back doors, than to bring temptation to the lips of young

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fools such as the four I had seen. I understand now why the preachers rage against drink. I have said, "There is no harm in it taken moderately"; and yet my own demand for beer helped directly to send these two girls reeling down the dark street to—God alone knows what end. If liquor is worth drinking, it is worth taking a little trouble to come at—such trouble as a man will undergo to compass his own desires. It is not good that we should let it lie before the eyes of children, and I have been a fool in writing to the contrary.

The quality of that fine fooling in "Stalky and Co." is not shown in Kipling's early taste in reading. He read Tennyson's "Defence of Lucknow" before the Society on one occasion, and later on in the term it is recorded he contributed to a meeting a recital of Bret Harte's "Concepcion de Arguello." At this time one must remember that our hero was but sixteen, and the choice of the latter poem to read before a school society, throws a very interesting sidelight on the boy that is not to be gained in "Stalky and Co." It will be recalled that Harte's poem tells of a Spanish girl who waited forty years for a foreign lover only to learn, in the end, that he had been killed on a journey to Russia a few weeks after the betrothal.

The only honour which Kipling received at Westward Ho was the first prize for English literature. There is reason to suppose that he substituted Browning, Dumas, and Scott, for the more learned men who prepared books for the sole purpose of confounding boys; from the fact that he did not distinguish himself in scholarship. Stevenson's essay, "A Defence of Idlers," shows how no time is actually lost, not even that which is idled away with a book. But this is a point that is very hard to explain to ambitious parents. However, Kipling's contributions to the college chronicle plainly showed that he meant to pass a hawser to literature, and take it in tow.

It was about this time that some of his verses appeared in a local paper, and no doubt he felt like Stevenson,

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when he sold his first essay, "one of the most popular and successful writers in Great Britain."

Kipling did not shine in the athletic field, and it is certain that he used to bank on his physical weakness when cricket was to be evaded. Only once does his name appear in the athletic competitions, and that is an entry for a quarter of a mile flat race, and in this he was one of the last "home." Of course his short-sightedness was a great handicap to him in all out-of-door sports, but eye-trouble did not prevent him becoming one of the best swimmers in the college, which was somewhat of an achievement at Westward Ho, where all the boys were keen swimmers.

If the testimony of "Foxy," the old drill-sergeant, can be relied upon, it seems that Kipling was not a favourite with the other boys. This ex-soldier was in the service of the college up to a few years ago, and he described Kipling, Beresford, and Dunsterville (the "terrible three" of "Stalky and Co.") in most vivid terms. He was the victim of many pranks which are recorded in the book, and it is said that he was not very gratified with his position in English literature. If Kipling did not find himself popular with his schoolfellows, it is only natural to find that he entered into an alliance with Stalky and McTurk. The other two boys in the Triple Alliance were officers' sons, and now hold commissions themselves.

The last visit paid by Kipling to his old school was in 1894. On July 25 of that year he journeyed to Westward Ho, in order to take part in a farewell presentation to Mr. Price, on his resignation after twenty years' headmastership. He made a short speech on this occasion, from which he evidently built up the poetical dedication to "Stalky and Co." which was published five years after this visit. It is said that "Stalky and Co." was written with the idea of giving the college a "leg up"; however, a few years after Kipling's visit it was transferred to the neighbourhood of London. The school-building



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still remains, and has been converted into an hotel. So when you walk along the cliffs, you need not trouble to look for college boys making their way from Appledore to invade the famous tuck-shop on "Bidevoor Promenade."

In a letter which during Easter, 1898, he wrote to the editors of a schoolboys' paper, Kipling showed that there was still plenty of the fun and twaddle of the Westward Ho days left in him. It is so characteristic of Kipling, the precocious Indian child, and Kipling as he is now, that I quote it intact :

To the EDITORS, *School Budget* :

GENTLEMEN,—I am in receipt of your letter of no date, together with copy of *School Budget*, Feb. 14, and you seem to be in possession of all the cheek that is in the least likely to do you any good in this world or the next. And, furthermore, you have omitted to specify where your journal is printed and in what county of England Horsmonden is situated. But, on the other hand, and notwithstanding, I very much approve of your "Hints on Schoolboy Etiquette," and have taken the liberty of sending you a few more as following :

1. If you have any doubts about a quantity, cough. In three cases out of five this will save you being asked to "say it again."

2. The two most useful boys in a form are : (a) the master's favourite *pro tem.* ; (b) his pet aversion. With a little judicious management (a) can keep him talking through the first part of the construe, and (b) can take up the running for the rest of the time. *N.B.*—A syndicate should arrange to do (b's) impots, in return for this service.

3. A confirmed guesser is worth his weight in gold on a Monday morning.

4. Never shirk a master out of bounds ; pass him with an abstracted eye, and, at the same time, pull out a letter and study it earnestly. He may think it is a commission for some one else.

5. When pursued by the native farmer, always take to the nearest ploughland. Men stick in furrows that boys can run over.

6. If it is necessary to take other people's apples, do it on a Sunday. You then put them inside your topper, which is better than trying to button them into a tight "Eton."

You will find this advice worth enormous sums of money, but I shall be obliged with a cheque or postal order for sixpence at your convenience, if the contribution should be found to fill more than one page.

Faithfully yours,

RUDYARD KIPLING.

CAPETOWN, Easter Monday, '98.



## CHAPTER III

### PERSONALITY

The Vicomte d'Humières : An American critic on Kipling : Kipling's natural love of Biblical language : The Bible and "Recessional" : A *Pall Mall Gazette* burlesque : "The Ballad of the King's Jest."



## CHAPTER III

### PERSONALITY

THE personality of Rudyard Kipling is a factor that counts for much. There are flaws in his finest works; there are certain defects in his genius. With all his display of power there are strange lapses and weaknesses. But such defects are not fatal, and the thirst of the true Kiplingite is never slaked. Considering how marvelously wide his range in verse and prose is, it is little short of a miracle that he has met with no serious reverses; he knows nothing of retreat or failure. The critics for the last few years seem to have been unanimous in denouncing him—which fact, of course, recommends him to us. Let the critics take courage, they may outwit oblivion yet, even though they do nothing but croak and catcall at some one who is hitching his wagon to a star. It is in this manner that immortals are made.

Nothing in all the range of Kipling's work is so marked by fine feeling as "Barrack Room Ballads"—nothing deals with more tangible people. Here he has put forth his best, his very best; and the richness of his general information about Tommy and his ways is constantly astonishing people. In the lore of the man-at-arms, Kipling is the wisest man of the day. Wisdom is the distilled essence of intuition, corroborated by experience. This is the secret of Kipling's strength—he went to study the life of the Tommy, not because it offered money and a new field, but because it honestly interested him. For years he has helped the soldier to fight his battles, until

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at last he can take him by the hand as a comrade, not as a lay-figure.

Kipling has a sense of humour. Humour is a lifebuoy, and saves you from drowning when you jump off a cliff into a sea of sermons. An author (or poet) who cannot laugh is apt to explode—he is very dangerous.

I am certain that Kipling is a man with a “very young laugh.” I can imagine him seated at his writing-table beneath that portrait of Burne-Jones, writing such a tale as “The Bonds of Discipline,” which tells of a succession of uproarious orgies culminating in a mock court-martial. I can hear that boyish laugh as he writes; I can hear him chuckle at his own witticisms or those of others.

The Vicomte d’Humières has told us of Kipling’s boyish laugh; he has also told us a little about his personal appearance, but this was about 1905. He speaks of the author’s frank and open expression; of his eyes full of sympathy and gaiety, eager to reflect life and all that it holds for tinker or king; of the hair cropped in the fashion of the Tommy. And his nose! It is the nose of the seeker after knowledge. It was Albrecht Durer who said of Erasmus: “With this nose he successfully hunted down everything but heresy.” To understand what Kipling has hunted down with his nose one must travel the world over. One thing is certain: Kipling does not attach himself to any particular creed or party. He evidently thinks that to belong to any party is to be owned by it. Kipling’s soul revolts at life in a groove. He dislikes typical men—their ways of life, their sophistry, their stupidity. He likes to be free of all party restrictions, so that he can study in his own sweet way—when at school he was distinguished from other boys by his independence.

At the little country printing works he learned his case, worked the ink-balls, and manipulated the cropper. He knows the craft of the book from the leaded type to

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the printed page. This has a distinct bearing on his literary style. His language is easy, fluid, suggestive. His paragraphs throw a purple shadow, and are pregnant with meaning beyond what the textbook supplies. This is one part genius and two parts experience.

When Kipling was assistant editor of the *Pioneer* (1887-1889), his intense interest in life and great curiosity no doubt prompted him to ask his chief to send him forth into the world to acquire special knowledge for that paper. The chief volunteered him for a pilgrimage, no doubt in the same spirit as Artemus Ward volunteered all his wife's relations for the purposes of war. And thus began the travels of Kipling, special correspondent to the whole bloomin' British Empire. He, no doubt, looked back with just a little twitch of the heartstrings towards the strange little newspaper office where he had spent some arduous but profitable years. Then the particular corner of Empire where he "lay awake at nights, plotting and scheming to write something that should take with the British Public" faded from view. It was the happiest moment he had ever known. The world lay beyond. You will find many of the tales of these wanderings in the two volumes "From Sea to Sea." Herein are to be read his fierce affections and his amazing dislikes. And so Kipling fared forth to fame and fortune.

An American critic, Arthur Bartlett Maurice,\* has summed up Kipling's attitude to the wit, brains, folly, and brawn of the world in a few words :

A young genius looked out upon the world, beheld there laughter and tears, folly and wisdom, and considerable wickedness of a healthy sort. The wickedness roused no anger in him. There was no disposition to howl stale moralities, his mission was not that of a social regenerator, his work betrayed no maudlin indignation. When he wrote about the deception of a husband he treated all three parties in the affair with perfect

\* Kipling's "Verse People," the *Bookman* (America), March, 1889. Reprinted in the same magazine January, 1911.

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and impartial good humour. His attitude was that of detachment, his *métier* to watch the comedy and tragedy of it all as one watches a play. And after having been very much amused and a little bored, he sat down to his writing-table with the conviction that

*We are very slightly changed  
From the semi-apes that ranged  
India's prehistoric clay.*

There are times when he seems almost to resent the fact that human nature shows so little originality in its weaknesses. The world wags on merrily and busily, new forces are constantly springing up as if out of the ground, the hand of man is growing more cunning and his brain more active, only his heart can invent no new sin. "Jack" Barrett jobbed off to Quetta in September to die there, attempting two men's work, Mrs. Barrett mourning him "five lively months at most"; Potiphar Gubbins, C.E., hoisting himself to social prominence and highly paid posts as the complaisant husband of an attractive wife—these are the oldest of pitiable human stories. Through the verses which tell of these people there rings a note of half-humorous protest at the monotonous sameness of life. For the purely narrative ditties he has more relish. A general officer, riding with his staff, takes down a heliograph message between husband and wife and finds himself alluded to as "that most immoral man." A young lieutenant wishing to break an engagement in a gentlemanly manner develops appalling epileptic fits with the assistance of Pears' Shaving Sticks. What an honest, wholesome love of fun! What animal spirits! He can see the amazement on the general's "shaven gill," and chuckle with Sleary over some especially artistic and alarming seizure. Above all he delights as

*Year by year in pious patience vengeful Mrs. Boffkin sits,  
Waiting for the Sleary babies to develop Sleary's fits.*

One thinks of him as roaring with laughter whilst he writes of the astonishment and discomfiture of these people, as the "good Dumas" used to roar with laughter at the humorous observations of his characters.

In "Departmental Ditties" we have Kipling the entertainer; in his short stories of Indian life he is the necromancer, but in "Barrack Room Ballads" we have Kipling the familiar friend.

Kipling is not slow in taking what he wants; he frankly admits his indebtedness to the work of other



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men in "When Omer Smote 'is Bloomin' Lyre." He makes no apologies—but takes all that he needs as his divine right. And, of course, he justifies himself in taking what he needs, with the thought that he gives it all back to us with interest added.

Kipling shows a natural love of Biblical language, and it is worth while to observe how he repeatedly goes to Holy Writ for sonorous expressions. In his beautiful domestic poem on Sussex the phrase "The lot has fallen to me" recalls Psalm xvi. 7 (Prayer Book version): "The lot is fallen unto me in a fair ground: yea, I have a goodly heritage." Again in the same poem we find in Stanza I, "And see that it is good," an echo, of course, from Genesis i. 31: "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." Take the sixth stanza of "Pharaoh and the Sergeant," and we read "'Tween a cloud o' dust and fire"—which can be compared with Exodus xiii. 21. The following references will show that Kipling was deeply indebted to the Authorized Version in "Recessional":

"Then beware lest thou forget" (Deuteronomy vi. 12).

"The thunder of the captains, and the shouting" (Job xxxix. 25).

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise" (Psalm li. 17).

"For a thousand years in Thy sight are but yesterday" (Psalm xc. 4).

"The Gentiles, which have not the law" (Romans ii. 14).

In "The Nursing Sister" is another instance to this point. Kipling has written "Our little maids that have no breasts"—which is to be found in the Song of Songs, viii. 8: "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts."

It is, of course, an unnecessary and tedious labour to compare minutely Kipling's work with the Bible, but one or two more comparisons may be interesting. "M'Andrew's Hymn," which I think reflects the

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author's ideas on life more than any other poem, seems to have been written with a fine carelessness. Kipling writes as the fancy takes him, and it is difficult to imagine that he ever corrects or prunes his prodigal luxuriance. This poem contains much from the by-ways of the Bible :

" Better the sight of eyes that see than wanderin' o' desire " (*see Ecclesiastes vi. 9*) and—

" The Mornin' Stars " (*Job xxxviii. 7*).

" When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

Here is a weird scrap of burlesque published in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, which rather hints at Kipling's fondness for Biblical quotation. Dr. Parker had made a statement in the *Idler* declaring that " Kipling was related to his wife ; though he did not know it " :

*He knows the slang of Silver Street, the horrors of Lahore,  
And how the man-seal breasts the waves that buffet Labrador . . .  
He knows each fine gradation 'twixt the General and the sub.,  
The terms employed by Atkins when they fling him from a pub.,  
He knows an Ekka pony's points, the leper's drear abode,  
The seamy side of Simla, the flaring Mile End Road ;  
He knows the Devil's tone to souls too pitiful to damn,  
He knows the taste of every regimental mess in " cham " ;  
He knows enough to annotate the Bible verse by verse,  
And how to draw the shekels from the British public's purse—*

In reading the " Ballad of the King's Jest " it will be noticed that Kipling has imitated the cadences and mannerisms of Whittier's " Barbara Frietchie." Perhaps, also, there is a hint of a debt to Ernest Seton-Thompson's method of dealing with animal stories in his *Jungle Books*. In these cases, Kipling, of course, takes no more than a writer's privilege : he borrows twenty-one shillings'-worth of silver, and pays us back with a bright golden guinea.

Among lively writers Kipling stands securely in the

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first place. His work is always constructive, his message one of courage and good cheer. Iconoclastic writers, reformers, all those good people who wish to suppress this or that, and punish the other, are often useful, sometimes amusing, but only the cheerful man lives in the heart of the people, only the hopeful is classic. We have troubles of our own, God knows ! We want the man who can give us a lift. And Kipling does. There are people who try to find a substitute for cheerfulness and action, but they all die before they find it out. Nothing that can be poured out of a bottle and taken with a spoon will take the place of a merry soul. Kipling is the man who exults most in things done with jest and a shout of joy and a dash of naïveté. Three degrees of bliss, three savers of lost souls he describes "The Jester," and the lowest place but the highest praise is given to him :

*Who has saved a soul by a jest  
And a brother's soul in sport. . . .  
[For] there do the Angels resort.*



## CHAPTER IV

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A perverse view of Kipling : " When the Rudyards cease from Kipling " : S. S. McClure : Kipling's idea of the mark of genius : McClure and " Kim " : J. M. Barrie's story of Kipling : Kipling and a Suffragist : The Sydney *Bookfellow* and a tiger yarn : Impressions of Kipling in Paine's Biography of Mark Twain : Twain's pun : First Meeting between Twain and Kipling : A letter from Twain : Mark Twain and the Boers : Kipling's " Bell Buoy " praised by Twain : The Ascot Cup : Rudyard Kipling and Mark Twain in robes of scarlet at Oxford : Practical joke by Kipling : Kipling and American publisher : Zangwill and the *Pall Mall Magazine* : Autograph hunters : The vanishing cheques : Brander Matthews in *American Outlook* : The *Liverpool Echo* : A disappointed admirer : A Rottingdean landlord and a Kipling autograph letter : " Dingley, the Famous Writer " : An excellent skit on Rudyard Kipling.





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IT is natural that there should have been a feeling of resentment on the part of some of the old school of literary men, when a young author like Kipling attracted so much attention. And when Kipling turned his back upon the reporter or interviewer, and refused to give them free material from which to serve up a paragraph or so of wishy-washy gossip, he was instantly branded as a peevish prig. This perverse view of Kipling was endorsed by the gossip of a section of the American Press at one time, and such remarks as the following, taken from the *Papyrus*, February, 1911, are fairly frequent even now :

There was nothing to his (Kipling's) talk—not a hint of the magic that lies across so many pages, or is condensed into so many of the aptest and most striking epithets in literature. Pompous, self-conceited, snobbish, self-conscious, priggish, banal, peevish and fractious, without a visible ray of the redeeming kindness of genius, or even a hint of his thaumaturgic mental power—this is what they told me of the man who has taught us all so much about men and women—who may be said to have added a new chapter to the Book of the Heart.

Here also is a characteristic rhyme which was freely bandied about among a certain section of London literary men :

*Will there never come a season  
Which shall rid us from the curse  
Of a prose which knows no reason  
And an unmelodious verse ;*

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*When the world shall cease to wonder  
At the genius of an Ass,  
And a boy's eccentric blunder  
Shall not bring success to pass ;*

*When mankind shall be delivered  
From the clash of magazines,  
And the inkstand shall be shivered  
Into countless smithereens ;  
When there stands a muzzled stripling,  
Mute, beside a muzzled bore ;  
When the Rudyard's cease from Kipling  
And the Haggards Ride no more ?*

Mr. S. S. McClure (founder of *McClure's Magazine*) says that he always found Kipling courteous and cordial. He also relates how, when he met Kipling in London, the famous author reminded him that at a previous meeting in America he "had talked *McClure's Magazine* to him for eight solid hours." And Kipling suffered the "shop" of the enthusiastic publisher without protest ! He only remarked "McClure, your business is dealing in brain futures."

It is stated from a quarter which should be well informed, that Kipling is a tolerant, appreciative novel-reader, and has a great enthusiasm for "shilling shockers." He has a large respect for Guy Boothby's books, which cannot be placed far above the average pot-boiler. Kipling once asked McClure whether he had ever read "David Harum." The publisher replied : "No. He's dead."

Kipling was tickled by the astute American's outlook on literature, and said : "That's right, McClure. The mark of genius is to eliminate the unnecessary."

It is interesting to learn that Kipling received 25,000 dollars for the rights of "Kim" when it was serialized in *McClure's Magazine*, although when the author stopped at New York on his way to England, a few years before, he was unable to find a publisher at any price.

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He submitted all his wonderful range of early work to Harper Bros. of New York, who rejected the whole parcel. It is said that the young author was so indignant that he tried no other American publisher. After he returned to London, he wrote "The Light that Failed," and Lippincotts paid him 800 dollars for this story, which was afterwards syndicated by McClure.

It is to be expected that Kipling should have American leanings; one of these is his craze for magazines. Magazine reading is a mania in the States. I am at this point reminded of the story of how Kipling raided Mr. J. M. Barrie's stock of magazines at Waterloo Station. Mr. Barrie was hastening from the bookstall laden with papers; a good many sixpenny ones among them, he dolefully relates, when, in rushing round a corner, he fell into the arms of Kipling, equally in a tearing hurry. They turned on each other with scowling faces, then smiled in recognition, and asked each other whither he went. Then Kipling exclaiming, "Lucky beggar, you've got papers!" seized the bundle from Barrie, flung him some money and rushed away.

"But you did not stoop to pick up his dirty halfpence, did you?" queried one of Mr. Barrie's hearers, amusedly.

"Didn't I though!" returned Barrie; and added ruefully, "but he hadn't flung me half enough."

Stories about Rudyard Kipling are very numerous, but I fear that he has not even a bowing acquaintance with the anecdotes which pass the rounds of the newspapers. Certain of them can be run down to other well-known authors of the past twenty years, but it would be impossible to straighten out the tangle with any accuracy.

This Kipling story comes to us *via* a Pittsburg paper. It is to the effect that at some anti-suffrage dinner—time and place conveniently omitted!—he said, "Have not the women got enough? In addition to all their other privileges, why should they have the vote? I was talking to a suffragist the other day," he continued,

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“and she said, ‘Why should a woman take a man’s name when she marries him?’ Why,” answered Kipling, “should she take everything else he’s got?”

I am indebted to the *Bookfellow* (Sydney) for the following very pleasing anecdote :

Ever hear Kipling tell his tiger yarn ? It was at a small station on one of the Indian railways. There was a stationmaster there and a porter. The latter was told not to act without instructions from the former, or, failing that, from the head office. A man-eater broke away from the jungle, attacked the station, seized the stationmaster, and began to make mincemeat of him. The porter remembered orders. Going to the telegraph, he wired to headquarters : “Tiger on platform, eating station-master. Please wire instructions.”

The ready wit of Kipling is illustrated in the following. “Don’t you think it strange,” a lady is supposed to have said to him, “that sugar is the only word in the English language where an ‘s’ and a ‘u’ come together and are pronounced ‘sh’?”

“Sure !” Kipling is alleged to have said.

Kipling’s genius, if not his tastes, was always admired by Mark Twain. His impressions of Kipling which are given in Paine’s *Biography*\* of the famous American writer clearly indicate this. It was Twain, it will be remembered, who paid a special tribute to Kipling at the Author’s Club (London) in 1899. The anxiety and sympathy of the entire American nation had just followed Kipling through a most dangerous illness at New York City, which Mark Twain declared had done much to bring England and America close together. He told the members of the Author’s Club that he had been engaged in the compiling of an epoch-making pun, and had brought it there to lay at their feet, “not to ask for their indulgence, but for their applause.” It was this :

Since England and America have been joined in Kipling, may they not be severed in Twain.

\* “Mark Twain : A Biography,” vol. ii, p. 880. (Harper & Bros., 1912.)

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We are informed that hundreds of puns had been made on the author's pen-name, but this was probably his first and only attempt. At the Savage Club, too, Twain recalled old times, and his first London visit twenty-seven years before :

In those days you could have carried Kipling around in a lunch-basket ; now he fills the world. I was young and foolish then, now I am old and foolisher.

It was in the summer of 1889 that the first meeting between Mark Twain and Rudyard Kipling took place. At that time Kipling was only known to an Anglo-Indian public, and had just started on a world tour for the *Pioneer*, writing impressions of his travel home to that journal. He journeyed to Elmira especially to see Mark Twain. It seems that Twain was not at Quarry Farm when he called, but Mrs. Crane and Susy Clemens asked him in, and he took a seat on the veranda and talked with them some time—that talk which Mark Twain told us might be likened to footprints, so strong and definite was the impression left on the memory.

He spent a couple of hours with me, and at the end of that time I had surprised him as much as he had surprised me—and the honours were easy. I believe that he knew more than any person I had met before, and I knew that he knew that I knew less than any person he had met before—though he did not say it, and I was not expecting that he would. . . He is a stranger to me, but he is a most remarkable man—and I am the other one. Between us we cover all knowledge ; he knows all that can be known, and I know the rest.

Mark Twain also has remarked that Kipling has enjoyed a unique distinction, " that of being the only living person not head of a nation whose voice is heard around the world the moment it drops a remark ; the only such voice in existence that does not go by slow ship and rail, but always travels first class—by cable."



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It was not until a year after Kipling's visit to Elmira that Twain identified him with the author of "Plain Tales," through a copy of the London *World* which had a sketch of Kipling in it, and a mention that he had travelled in the United States.

Kipling has, of course, left an account of this visit in his "Letters of Travel."

In a letter to Kipling which Twain wrote from Vancouver, when he was on his way around the world in 1895, he refers to their meeting at Elmira :

It is reported that you are about to visit India. This has moved me to journey to that far country in order that I may unload from my conscience a debt long due to you. Years ago you came from India to Elmira to visit me. It has always been my purpose to return that visit and that great compliment some day. I shall arrive next January, and you must be ready. I shall come riding my ayah with his tusks adorned with silver bells and ribbons, and escorted by a troop of native howdahs richly clad and mounted upon a herd of wild bungalows ; and you must be on hand with a few bottles of ghee, for I shall be thirsty.

During the last South African War, Mark Twain's sympathies were always with the Boers. He had explained that his head was with the British, but his heart must remain with the Boers, who were fighting for their homes. Twain saw that the only thing for him to do was to remain silent, in spite of a "voice" which urged him to enter his protest in the Press. But in spite of this, Mark Twain cherished no hostility against Kipling, who held very different opinions on the great question.

"I am not fond of all poetry," Twain remarked, "but there's something in Kipling that appeals to me. I guess he's just about my level." He also once declared when he was at Florence, that he hoped Fate would bring Kipling there : "I would rather see him than any other man."

Kipling, too, held a very high opinion of Mark Twain's



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genius, as the following extract from a letter written to the well-known American publisher, Mr. Frank Doubleday, clearly indicates :

I love to think of the great and godlike Clemens. He is the biggest man you have on your side of the water by a d—— sight—Cervantes was a relation of his.

In a letter to Mr. Doubleday written almost the same time (1903), we learn that Mark Twain gloried in the riotous strength and superabundant vigour of Kipling's verse. He read "The Bell Buoy" over and over again—"my custom with Kipling's work"—and also remarked that a "bell buoy is a deeply impressive fellow being." Many a night at sea he had heard him call, sometimes in his pathetic and melancholy way, and sometimes with his strenuous and urgent note until he got his meaning—now he had the words! He hoped some day "to hear the poem chanted or sung—with the bell buoy breaking out in the distance."

We may not detail all the incidents regarding the linking up of Kipling and Twain; even this path leads to monotony in the end. We may only mention that on June 26, 1907, Rudyard Kipling, Mark Twain and many other distinguished citizens assembled at the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford, to receive degrees. A perfect storm of applause greeted Mark Twain when he appeared clad in his robe of scarlet; and the Oxford undergraduates wanted to know where he had hidden the Ascot Cup. A reference, of course, to Mark Twain's speech to the Pilgrims at the Savoy Hotel (June 25, 1907), in which he had mentioned how, on the day of his arrival in England, he had been pained by a newspaper placard which read: "Mark Twain Arrives: Ascot Cup Stolen."

Rudyard Kipling was also a supreme favourite; but it was Twain who was singled out for most of the yells and cheering of the undergraduates. After the ceremony

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of conferring the degrees, Mark Twain, Lord Curzon, and Kipling viewed the Oxford pageant from a box, and it was here that a folded slip of paper, on the outside of which "Not True" was written, was passed up to them. The paper opened read :

*East is East and West is West,  
And never the Twain shall meet.*

Kipling is remembered by his old neighbours in the Punjab as a man who was brimful of boisterous spirits, who laughed and joked the lifelong day. He was fond of practical joking. On one occasion he amused himself the whole evening, by showing the natives of Dharwal all the grotesque monsters on a set of magic lantern slides, illustrating Jack the Giant Killer, as authentic portraits of the Russian people, whose activity beyond Herat was then causing considerable alarm in Anglo-Indian circles.

An American publisher who secured a story from Kipling, was a teetotaler to the verge of fanaticism, and looking through the story he was shocked to come upon a passage where the hero was served with a glass of sherry. He wrote to Kipling, pointing out the moral harm that might result from reading of such a depraved person, and requested him to substitute some non-intoxicating beverage for the harmful sherry.

"Oh, all right," Kipling replied, "make it a glass of 'Blank's' Baby Food. I see he advertises largely in your magazine."

Of course he has no way of protecting himself from being forcibly made sponsor for anecdotes in the papers ; and the reader is cautioned against accepting as authentic any of those which appear in this chapter. Here is "an uncopyrighted anecdote" which passed the rounds of the American Press at the time when one could not

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pick up a paper without reading some story regarding Kipling :

Once when Rudyard Kipling was a boy he ran out on the yard-arm of a ship. "Mr. Kipling," called a scared sailor, "your boy is on the yard-arm, and if he lets go he'll drown."

"Ah," responded Mr. Kipling with a yawn, "but he won't let go."

This incident also happened to Jim Fiske, Horace Walpole, Napoleon, Dick Turpin, Julius Cæsar and the poet Byron.

Every popular author has to face the autograph hunters, and during his last year of residence in America, Kipling was assailed on all sides by this particular breed of pesterer. He confided to Zangwill that he sent out two hundred circulars during this period, to the "admir-ing crew who ranked him before Shakespeare," proposing that they should send him a donation for a charity in return for his signature.\* Kipling continued, "then the floodgates—not of heaven—were opened." For weeks abuse rained in upon him, and "thief" seems to have been the mildest rebuke he received.

At Vermont Kipling paid all his household bills by cheque. Many of these cheques were very small, and the shrewd Yankee tradesmen soon discovered that autograph hunters would pay much over face value for them, so quite a number did not turn up at the bank for payment.

One shopkeeper obliged his "autograph" clients with a duplicate memorandum of the account. For example : a bill against Kipling for five pounds of cheese, accompanied by an autograph cheque was a souvenir that commanded a good price. The consequence was, that when Kipling sent his bank book to be balanced, it invariably showed more to his credit than there should have been on its return. He was unable to account for the discrepancy, until one day he saw one of his cheques given for a case of bottled beer framed and hanging in a

\* *Pall Mall Magazine*, September, 1895.

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Boston book-shop. The first thing he did, when he returned to his home, was to burn his cheque book. After that he insisted on paying his household bills in coin of the realm.

Here is a story related by Brander Matthews in the *American Outlook* (January 14, 1911):

Once when I was chatting with Rudyard Kipling about the principles of literary art, I chanced to tell him that I had pointed out to a class of college students the various masters of story-telling in whose footsteps he had trod, and by whose examples he had obviously profited. He smiled pleasantly and drawled out, "Why give it away? Why not let them think it was just genius?"

The *Liverpool Echo* printed the following amusing experience:

Kipling was staying in the hills in Simla, where all the lovely Anglo-Indian ladies reside in summer when it is too hot for them to endure the climate in the plains. One morning the lady at whose house he was a guest introduced him to a young and fair "grass widow." As the couple chatted amicably together whilst walking through the hills, Kipling remarked, "I suppose you can't help thinking of that poor husband of yours grilling down there?" The lady gave him an odd look, he thought, and he realized why when he afterwards learnt that she was not a "grass widow" but a widow indeed.

Here is a story which appeared in *Yes or No* (January 18, 1908), but it has been told of many celebrated people; however, I give it for what it is worth:

A young lady admirer of Kipling on meeting the famous writer was rather disappointed. "You!" she cried. "You—you are Rudyard Kipling."

R. K. felt rather embarrassed, but managed to modestly murmur, "Yes." "But I thought," she said, "I thought you were—oh, how shall I say it?—something quite, quite different!"

"Oh, I am," responded Rudyard in a very confidential tone, "I am, madam! Only, you see, this is my day off!"

When Kipling lived at Rottingdean, in the old

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house which faces the vicarage, he was annoyed by the driver of the local 'bus, who often pointed his whip when he encountered the poet, and announced in a stentorian voice to his human freight: "Here we have Mr. Kipling, the soldier-poet." Kipling suffered this in silence, but things came to a crisis when the Jehu came into collision with his favourite tree, doing much damage to it. He wrote at once a vigorous letter of complaint to the 'bus owner who was landlord of the "White Horse Inn."

Boniface laid the letter before the select company of his bar parlour, who, one and all advised calm indifference. Also, a man with an eye to the main chance, offered the landlord ten shillings in cash for the autograph letter. Both cash and advice were accepted. A second and stronger letter followed, and Boniface carried the autograph to a bookseller and demanded a pound for it, since the violence of the letter was quite double strength. The bookseller eagerly snapped it up, and the merry landlord warmed to the game, dreaming of more missives. But next day Kipling entered briskly and very wrathful.

"Why don't I answer your letter, sir? Why, I was hoping you'd send me a fresh one every day. They pay a deal better than 'bus driving."

It is not surprising that an author such as Kipling, the greatest in his own particular art that the world of English letters has seen, should figure as the hero of a novel. But few are acquainted with this book which was crowned in 1906 by the Goncourt Academy. It was written by Jerome and Jean Tharaud, and entitled "Dingley, the Famous Writer."

The book is an attack on British Imperialism, and a critic in *Le Figaro* claims that Dingley, the hero, is no other than Mr. Kipling. "Dingley," says this critic, condensing the plot, "is a genius and an immensely popular novelist. He has glorified English empire and colonialism. He has understood and delineated Oriental



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as well as Occidental character ; he has made the past live, and has interpreted ancient civilization to modern. In short, he has known success, fame, and glory.”

None the less, Dingley is dissatisfied. Dominated by the glamour of empire, he wishes to achieve in action something beyond mere writing :

An accidental scene witnessed by him on the street decides his course. The British Empire, at that moment, is held in check and defied in South Africa by a mere handful of audacious and insolent Boers. The pride of England is wounded and humiliated, and all patriots are disheartened. Dingley happens to see how a recruiting sergeant secures two or three volunteers for the campaign after filling them with gin and extorting binding promises from them. These drunken, lazy, good-for-nothing vagrants, Dingley says to himself, when they recover self-control and find themselves in her Majesty's uniform, will be transformed into men, into soldiers of empire. The virtues and heroism of war will make noble creatures of them. What a fine subject for a book on war for empire ! The first few chapters of the new book are written at once in feverish haste, but Dingley determines to embark for South Africa and see the war for himself. His wife, a gentle, noble woman of French extraction, urges him to stay in England and take a more philosophical view of war, which degrades and brutalizes some, even if it elevates others.

On the way out some of the seamy side of militarism is forced upon Dingley, but he ignores it, and immediately on arrival joins a detachment of troops which is in pursuit of a Boer commando.

In the meantime, Mrs. Dingley forms at Cape Town a sincere friendship with a loyal Boer family, named Du Toit, whose eldest son, Lucas, however, has taken up arms against the British. Nothing further is known about Lucas, and his family fear that he has been taken prisoner. “ Archie, son of his father, goes out at night to see an executed Boer rebel, and returns with a fever that threatens to be fatal. Dingley is hurriedly sent for, and the letter reaches him at a distance. The road is not safe, the fields are barren, deserted, and the badly dug graves of soldiers are on every hand. Dingley chances to fall into the hands of Lucas Du Toit, who,



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however, shows every kindness to the Imperialist and Boer-hating Englishman, thus heaping coals of fire upon his head. Dingley arrives too late; his boy is dead." Shortly after this Lucas is captured, and although Dingley can save him from death, he refuses to help the rebel who had once been kind to him.

The striking line and phrases in Kipling's verse have, as it may be expected, attracted many parodists; and some years ago the papers were full of burlesques and skits on his work. Many readers will remember a little volume styled "All Expenses Paid" (Constable and Co., 1895) which contained some excellent parody and caricature of the poetry and style of the great ones in the literary world. The outline of this skit is as follows. A certain butcher of unusual aspirations and immense fortune devoted ten thousand pounds to taking a select party of minor poets to Parnassus. Messrs. Richard Le Gallienne and W. B. Yeats arranged the outing, and the company included Rudyard Kipling, William Watson, Arthur Symons and Francis Thompson; and in truth all "stars" of the accursed race of poets who worshipped at the Bodley Head. How they started out and foregathered at the foot of Parnassus, is all chronicled with a refreshing irreverence towards the minor bards. Ascending the resort of the Muses, they were led by Mercury before an inspiring gathering of the mighty dead, with Shakespeare in the chair, and Wordsworth, Shelley, and Chaucer well in the front. Adorned with a garland of crocuses, attired in robes of pure white, and seated on an ass similarly decorated and attired, they were led in order of merit before the master whose work was held to have most influenced their own.

The limited circulation of the poets and poetesses continued without any notable incident till it came to the turn of Rudyard Kipling to go on tour, for the friend of Tommy Atkins declared in an undertone that he was tired of the whole mummery, that the beastly crocuses got in his eyes, that he felt an almost uncontrollable impulse to misbehave himself

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in some way or another. Happily he was prevailed upon to be pacific, but no expostulation from his chief would induce him to wear an ecstatic cast of countenance, though an expression of pleasure flitted over his face when the donkey stopped in front of Chaucer. And now the two extremes of English poetry confronted each other ! Before the Everlasting could speak Apollo sang with an army accent the verses here following :

*I've criticized some mortals in my time,  
An' some of 'em was great an' some was not ;  
There was some as couldn't jingle worth a dime,  
There was 'Omer, Billiam Shakespeare, Walter Scott :  
But for knockin' slang an' poetry into one,  
For puttin' pepper on our old emotions,  
It's certain sure you easy take the Bun,  
An' you play the Comb an' Paper with our notions !*

*So 'ere's to you, Lippy-Kippy, from the far United States,  
Where the white man spends the dollar and the Nigger wipes the plates ;  
You've got your share o' crocuses, an' if the colour suits,  
You're welcome, Lippy-Kippy, you can bet your bloomin' boots !*

\* \* \* \* \*

While these verses were being recited by Apollo in his best Cockney manner, the changes that swept over the face of Chaucer were rapid, but unforbidding. Before the song commenced he had seemed to be upon the point of engaging the Laureate of Pipeclay in conversation, but at its termination he buried his face in his purple mantle. Muttering to himself that the immortal was a "bigoted old buffer," Rudyard Kipling stirred the beast he bestrode into a continuation of his walk by the simple expedient of kicking his ribs.

## CHAPTER V

### THE "BRUSHWOOD BOY" AND "THEY"

Easy and contemptuous style : "The Cruise of the *Cachalot*" : American *Bookman* : Outline of "The Brushwood Boy" : "They" : Letters on "They" : "The Disturber of the Traffic" : Kipling's representation of mental moods : Moonshine in "At the End of the Passage" : "The Finest Story in the World."



## CHAPTER V

### THE "BRUSHWOOD BOY" AND "THEY"

IN estimating Kipling's genius and his influence, one must take stock of the gear and equipment with which he started out into the triumphant sunlight of public favour. His imperialism is a thing apart; it has no bearing on his pure literary gifts: moreover fame came to him on the tide of popularity which greeted "The Story of the Gadsbys." This book may be said to mark the turning-point in his career. And I am inclined to think that one of the chief secrets of Kipling's power and success is to be found in the now famous *Envoi* to that unpretentious little book; it is the last line with its almost brutal frankness that holds the secret: "He travels the fastest who travels alone." As the theme of the story was marriage with its inevitable peck of cares, the line has been looked upon as a somewhat rough and ready warning, half serious and half mocking, to those about to consider the institution which is declared by St. Paul "to be honourable among all men." Was it a note of warning pure and simple, or should we look upon it as a stepping-stone that one must mount to sum up the man and his creed? We must never lose sight of the fact that Kipling's style is always easy and contemptuous; it might be likened to a torpedo-boat, cutting her way through a North Sea gale by the mere force of her screw-propellers.

The Kipling we know of ever travels alone. It was so

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in his early days in India, it is more so now. Like almost all Anglo-Saxon writers, Kipling has a message and is more or less a moralist. He believes in a life of vigorous action as a cure-all. "Stand to your work and be wise—certain of sword and pen," reads one of his well-known lines. That is Kipling all over. He has no sympathy with the man who is not certain about himself, or the man who cannot travel alone. To Mr. F. T. Bullen who asked him to contribute an introduction to "The Cruise of the *Cachalot*" he once wrote :

Some rather interesting experiences have taught me that the best way of making a man hate me for life is to meddle in any way with his work . . . If the book is good, it will go, and if not, nothing will make it stir . . . All the men who want to stick a knife into me would stick it into you as soon as they saw my name prefacing your book. Bitter experience has taught me that that kind of thing doesn't pay—

which was only another way of saying "He travels the fastest who travels alone."

The first thing that strikes one about him is his complete independence. This rather surly attitude on the part of an author who was not flaming amazement on us, who was not blazing a trail of literature, would almost be an impertinence. But Kipling's gross, implacable creed breaks through our perplexity; we are carried breathless over all his paganism by the very way in which he ruthlessly breaks all the laws and traditions of the art of letters. He is the old gipsy man of literature; he knows no laws; what he wants he simply takes; and if you don't like his methods and were so bold as to tell him so, he would most certainly say "lump them." He is not considering you or anyone else; he does not care a fig for your "college educations"—for the most part "colleges are places where the pebbles are polished and the diamonds are dimmed." He is only considering how to get to the goal he has marked out—to be master of the elastic, elusive, and delightful English



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language. He is following in the tracks of the muzzy Scotsman, the shopkeeping pamphleteer, the gaoled tinker, the German Jew and the French thief—all searchers after the essential word. He is a prince, a vagabond, a highwayman or what you choose to call him, but you cannot afford to ignore him.

The American *Bookman* comments on the barrack-yard “Attention! d—— your eyes” style with which Kipling girds on his literary harness:

“I will write what I please. I will not alter a line. If it please me to do so I will refer to her Gracious Majesty—bless her!—as the little fat widow of Windsor, and fill the mouth of Mulvaney with filth and oaths. I will not ‘meet people.’ If I am on ship-board and prefer passing my time in the smoking-room drinking Scotch whiskey I will do so. I will not truckle to old women or fawn upon fools. Here is my work. You may take it or leave it. *C’est à prendre ou à laisser!* I am playing off my own bat. I am travelling alone—always alone.” This attitude is of vital interest as being in a measure the keynote of his work. It has another interest. People have invited and received personal rebuffs and gone away crying: ‘Snob! Cad!’ Snob! Of course, he is a snob! So, madame or monsieur, is any great man who does not hang gaping and breathless upon your twaddle; who does not accede gaily to your request that he send you an autograph collection of his works; who does not undertake to find a publisher for your own or your daughter’s manuscript. A snob! Certainly.

With all his fire and his energy, his wilful heathenism (bravely blatant in that wonderful series of children’s short stories beginning with “Just-So Stories” and ending with “Puck of Pook’s Hill” and “Rewards and Fairies”), his boyish enthusiasm for effective force, his periodical fits of political fanaticism, and his lyric delight in sound, smell and colour, and all the gear that goes with the far-flung battle-lines of our Empire, Rudyard Kipling eludes us. Even in his gorgeous and mighty songs of our soldiers there is often something shadowy and intangible. And I suppose there is not a shadow of a doubt that he means there should be. He seems to be a compound of a Benedictine Monk, a Crusader, and a Buccaneer.

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A good example of Kipling's curious mixture of severe and yet sensitive art is the study in dreams entitled "The Brushwood Boy." It is probable that everybody who is at all a constant dreamer has had at least one experience of an event, or a sequence of circumstances which have come to his mind in sleep, being subsequently realized in the material world. But, after all, if one reflects, this is not at all remarkable; it would be stranger still if this fulfilment did not occasionally happen, since our dreams are as a rule concerned with people whom we know and places with which we are familiar when we return from the "City of Sleep."

Kipling in his "Brushwood Boy" has grasped this fact, and in his hero, George Cottar, we have a study at once penetrating and charming. We follow his progress from nursery days to the period immediately before his marriage, in a series of fantastic dreams which range side by side with everyday life. These dreams are always connected with the Brushwood Girl. In the first place, a princess from an old illustrated edition of Grimm is seized upon as the girl of his dreams, but after a visit to Oxford, where he comes into direct contact with the real Brushwood Girl at a performance of "Pepper's Ghost," he "shamelessly" discards the princess from the fairy story, and either consciously, or subconsciously installs the "little girl dressed all in black." He has dazzling adventures at home and in the Far East with the dream-girl, and, interwoven with his early days in the Indian Army, Kipling has given us the incommunicable stuff from which dreams are made, the ghost-whispers which come out of the darkness, and return again to the darkness.

But one dream with variations comes intermittently to George Cottar for twenty years or so, and each time the Brushwood Girl appears to grow more real.

As the dream continues to recur, the power of reality becomes so contagious and overpowering that the

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reader is forced to conclude that the physical attraction which the dream-girl wields over George Cottar warns him away from all other women.

When Cottar returns to England on furlough he finds the Brushwood Girl of his dreams in Miriam Lacy. Everybody who is familiar with Kipling's writings will put this story in a favourable place; besides being a wonderful excursion into the realms of fantasy, it is sealed with his seal, and is eloquent with his gospel. Here we have for a hero the author's ideal of manhood: the clean-living, decisive, headlong, headstrong Englishman: and in a background of silence and poetry lurks the Brushwood Girl, singing in our ears the haunting refrain of the “City of Sleep.”

In “They,” one of the most wonderful of Kipling's short stories, he has treated a most fascinating subject: the souls of dead children. To judge from “Wireless” and “The House Surgeon,” Kipling is rapidly becoming a kind of prose Browning. The idea of the story is explained in the versified prologue “The Return of the Children,” little mites who found Heaven too large and cold for their immature souls, and who could not find any joy in the harps and crowns, nor “the cherubs' dove-winged races.”

Eventually release is obtained through “Mary the Mother,” and they return to earth. Such ghosts could not return to their parents, for ordinary people would not perceive them, and if they did, they would be too terrified at their reappearance in astral bodies to receive and cherish them once more.

It is natural that “They” should be attracted by the blind woman. Her empty spinster life, her great love for children, and the wonderful second sight with which all blind people are blessed, are things which have taught this mystical woman to understand; so God sends the souls of dead children who wanted to come homeward, to her.

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I cannot do better than quote two letters which appeared in *T.P.'s Weekly*\* regarding this story, which is certainly very abstruse. The Blind Woman is one of the most mystical characters in Kipling's tales, far more so than "The Brushwood Boy" or Miriam.

H. G. writes :

I think the key to this story is to be found in the little poem "The Return of the Children," which precedes it. This seems to suggest that the children were not dream-children, but, to use a very expressive term, "revenants," *i.e.* little child-ghosts who, feeling lonely and unhappy amid the splendours of heaven, had been graciously permitted to return in spirit to the earth they had left and to the earthly joys so dear to them—childish fun and play, and human love and sympathy. They were attracted to the blind lady's home by her great love of children and her passionate longing for their society. Moreover, this beautiful, secluded, old-world place was a veritable earthly paradise for children. There are various incidents in the story which seem to discredit the idea that these little beings were dream-children, for one thing the fact that they were visible to others besides the dreamer himself. Her visitor had caught glimpses of them before he met her at all, and they were so real to him that it was not until his third visit that he discovered that they were not creatures of flesh and blood. It was the little girl's cares that revealed the truth to him in a flash. The "little brushing kiss" on the palm of his hand was, as he tells us, "a fragment of the mute code devised very long ago"—a love-token from a long-lost little daughter. In a moment of joy and sorrow intermingled he realized what these children were, and the "woman who could see the naked soul" at once became aware that he understood at last.

Here is another view of the story :

The children are not "dream-children" but little ghosts. Anyone who has lost a child may meet its little spirit in the blind woman's house. She, childless but a lover of children, is permitted to feel and hear them near her, and she is surprised when she finds that her visitor can see them. She knows then that he has a right to come to her house. If they are not ghosts, how is it that the poor woman who loses a child while the visitor is in the blind woman's house can afterwards see and hear the children? Her own is among them. Or, if they are merely dream-children, what is the explanation of the *fear* felt by the man who is rude to the blind woman over some question of rent, and who refuses to enter the house? If I

\* February 6, 1914.



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remember right (I have not the book near me), at the end of the story a little child's ghost kisses the visitor, and he recognizes it for one he has lost. If this explanation is not the true one, and the empty fancy that “They” are dream-children born of the blind woman's dreams is correct, I shall feel as if the story had lost all its charm. It is, anyhow, so slight and diaphanous that interpretations seem only to shatter it.

The outline of the story is simply this :

A man who has lost a very dearly loved little one, for whom he is always fretting, during a motor-car run discovers a weather-worn Elizabethan house at the end of a side way track, which at first appeared to lead to nowhere in particular. Here he meets the owner of the House Beautiful, a childless woman who has gathered about her the souls of dead children.

The garden seems to be haunted by many vague, little melancholy things, and the stranger only dimly comprehending that he is tampering with some of the hidden laws of nature, tries to allure these spirit children. Moreover—a most pitiful twilight scene—the man finds his own dead child. Then he knows that he must not ever return again, for the blood-bond would only tend to break the communion between the blind woman and “They.” It was only through her perfect and unhuman love that the Lost Children were permitted to return.

A brilliant little survey of “They” from the aspect of a symbolist appeared in a New York paper shortly after the story was published in *Scribners' Magazine* (August, 1904). I cannot refrain from quoting this in full :

The last of the Rosicrucians was sitting in his favourite corner of the library, reading the latest scientific news, when I broke in on his seclusion.

“Have you read ‘They’?” I asked.

“I have.”

“What do you think of it?”

“It is the most wonderful story Rudyard Kipling has ever written—the most elemental and the most artistic.”

“But what does it mean?”

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"It means as much or as little as you have the capacity to understand. Moreover, judging from explanations I have heard, it is a test of the purity of your thought."

"Don't be Delphic," I protested. "Remember that this is New York in the twentieth century. Nevertheless, if your knowledge of Trismegistus or Albertus Magnus can help you to explain 'They,' I'll try to listen patiently."

"But you must tell me where your difficulty lies. To me the little tale is wonderfully simple."

"But what is it all about?"

"If I explain," said the Rosicrucian, "will you promise not to quote Byron and ask me to explain my explanation?"

I gave the necessary pledge, and our club mystic proceeded to expound the mystery.

"Like all tales dealing with elemental emotions, 'They' is capable of as many interpretations as it has readers. For his text the poet—in this story he is more the poet than the author—has once more gone to the confessions of Agur, the son of Jakeh. Of the 'three things that are never satisfied, yea four things' that say 'it is not enough,' he has chosen two, the grave and the childless woman. You who know the world know that on one hand it is full of mourners for children who went down to untimely graves and on the other with lonely women who mourn with Jephthah's daughter because they are not mothers in Israel."

"Then 'They' are the souls of dead children?" I asked.

"Exactly. And the mother-love of a childless woman has gathered them about her. To make this possible the poet has drawn on his wonderful knowledge of mysticism to build a phantasy in which he rights an eternal wrong—in which he makes the victims of the grave satisfy the yearnings of the childless."

"But what is the meaning of all that talk about colours and 'the Egg Itself'?"

"My son," said the mystic benignly, "if you have never seen the colours or the Egg you could no more understand an explanation of them than you could understand the properties of a fourth dimension or the functions of a sixth sense. Suffice it to say that the colours and the Egg belong to the most esoteric mysteries of Oriental philosophy and that those who have knowledge of them have met at the sources of life. Only by ascribing to his hero and heroine this knowledge could the poet give them the intimacy that made the story possible."

"But what is the story?"

"It is this. A man who has lost a dearly loved child for which he is ever mourning stumbles on the home of a childless woman whose house is haunted by the souls of children. While only partly understanding, he tries to make friends with the children, and the one that finally comes to him is his own lost child. Then he understands and knows that he must come no more to the House Beautiful. Neither may he continue to



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mourn, for the one he has lost is playing an unguessed part in the scheme of things and is happy and making another happy. The story is one of solace for the mourning."

"But all that is pure superstition," I protested.

"Quite true; and is not the world as full of superstition to-day as ever it was? In taking a bit of superstition and giving it an up-to-date setting Kipling has once more shown his wonderful knowledge of life. He knows that the man gifted to see visions can see them from a motor-car as readily as from a hermit's cell, and he knows that the most exact scientific knowledge can be found cheek by jowl with the most dreamy mediævalism. If the heroine of the story avoided having iron on her hearth lest the little spirit should not come to her, you can still find thousands in rural England who use iron to fend them from spirits. You may remember that Grant Allen made striking use of this superstition in his little story of 'The Round Tower.' Taken as a whole the story is one of exquisite mysticism in an aggressively up-to-date setting."

"But what is the use of it all?"

"A sufficient answer should be that it is beautiful; but if you seek for more you must ask of those who mourn little children or yearn for them."

This closed our interview, and as I passed out to the smoking-room I remembered that the poet is himself a mourner and that perhaps the kiss on the hand given by the spirit-child might have been part of a secret code like that of the story—but this is passing the decent bounds of analytical criticism.

Kipling has studied his children as he has studied his sailormen, his animals, his soldiers. One of the most beautiful of all his child studies is the "Story of Muhammad Din," and it reflects the author's genuine love of the little ones. In this pathetic sketch we are introduced to the very small son of Imam Din, the writer's "Khitmatgar." The child requests the loan of a polo ball from the narrator, which leads to a friendship which is carried on with great formality on both sides. The man looks forward to meeting his solemn little friend, and when the child sickens and dies he is greatly grieved, and would have given much to have avoided the parents carrying the frail little body to the burying-ground.

There are few of us who can follow Muhammad Din to the grave ("respectfully, and at a distance, that we may not intrude,") and not feel a little as though something

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were tugging at our heartstrings the while. Have we not all at some time understood the magic of those little hands that fashion houses from the dust, and gardens from dead flowers? The loss of such a little one is a bitter thing in life, and Kipling has said himself: "People say that that kind of wound heals. It doesn't. It only skins over."

At first blush one would not think to discover in Kipling's stories a certain suggestion of womanly tenderness. But there is an exquisitely delicate subcurrent which is suggestive of the feminine soul in all his child-sketches.

There are few living authors who could write anything to equal "Baa, Baa, Black sheep," "His Majesty the King," or "They." He who seeks to disparage or laugh at such work reveals a stratum of very coarse moral clay in his cosmos.

Only women [Kipling says] understand children properly; but if a mere man keeps very quiet and humbles himself properly, and refrains from talking down to his superiors, the children will sometimes be good to him and let him see what they think about the world.

The following lines which have not been published before, deserve a place in this chapter. They were written in a copy of "Just-So Stories," which Kipling presented to a little friend:

*When skies are grey instead of blue,  
With clouds which come to dishearten,  
And things go wrong as they sometimes do  
In life's little kindergarten,  
Pray, my child, don't weep or wail,  
And don't, don't take to tiptoeing,  
But cheer your soul with a little tale  
By neighbour Rudyard Kipling.*

# “THE BRUSHWOOD BOY”

## II

What shall be said of “The Disturber of Traffic”? It is alarming indeed suddenly to chance upon this story after reading the poem “To the True Romance,” which stands as a prelude to “Many Inventions.” In this awful story a man in a lighthouse, who begins to see streaks in the water, goes mad, and conceives the notion that the streaks are due to shipping traffic in the straits. He determines to lead off the ships in another direction, and with the aid of buoys and red lights, he conveys the impression that the channel is not navigable.

Kipling’s mental process, one is bound to confess, seems to run at its best in the abnormal. In some tales his antics are as wild as the devil’s; he dances through the pages like a mad magician. His best work has been done in moments of cerebral stimulation that do not come to more soberly constructed men. He is clever in the exposition of the gruesome—“The Mark of the Beast” is possibly one of the most ghastly death-dance tales in our literature. If Oscar Wilde had written it (but I am afraid he could not), it would have been paraded as the limit of the “ghastly artistic.” “The Mark of the Beast” and that other ugly story, “At the End of the Passage,” were written before Kipling was out of his teens.

But Kipling is cleverest of all in his exposition of madness.\* He has the grip and the power in the psychology of insanity that he lacks in the psychology of the sane. One can see this by the flashes of insanity in

\* See interesting article by Ernest Newman in the *Free Review*, December 1, 1893.

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"The Man who Would be King" or "The Madness of Private Ortheris." No one can deny the brilliancy of his vivid representation of mental moods; whether you want it or not, you have the full horror of these moods impressed upon you as with hot irons. Witness this passage from "The Light that Failed"—"The mind was quickened and the revolving thoughts ground against each other, as millstones grind when there is no corn between." Note, too, the roving craze or madness working for ever on the overburdened brain of the leading character in this novel.

Often his work contains a good deal of hasty, dogmatic impressionism, but his literary power seems to pull him through in the end. For even in such a tale as "At the End of the Passage" there is a good deal of pure moonshine. Perhaps, however, it is ill work quarrelling with a man for now and then flying in the face of facts when he thinks the pulse of the reader may be quickened by subterfuge. The gist of the tale lies in the fact that a camera is applied to the eyes of a dead man lying in a *dark room*, with the astonishing result of getting a picture of the corpse's retina. The image on the retina is so horrible that the photographer destroys the negative, and refuses to speak about it.

It has been hinted that phantoms of the brain hurried the man to his death, but even if the netlike expansion of the optic nerve retained any impressions after death, it would need special preparations in the way of lighting to gain any sort of picture with a camera. It is much more likely that the photographer saw that his efforts had been without any result, and to evade ridicule smashed the blank plate under his heel.

There is admirable art in "The Finest Story in the World." Note the delicate manner in handling this tale so that the figure of the poor, queer bank-clerk—Oh, that accursed race of bank clerks!—always hovers between the squalor of a Brixton public-house and the land of

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tumultuous dreams; the story always wavers in the suggestive.

The psychological solution of the brilliancy of Kipling's work in this direction is that he is subject to moments of intense cerebral activity, during which he is gifted with a certain psychic comprehension of mental phases.

There has been some difference of opinion as to whether Kipling's later work sustains his reputation. He would be a bold critic who would try to answer that question off-hand and with sure judgment. But it is certain that Kipling is no longer the idol that he was. The turning-point in his popularity was, I think, reached when he fell upon the “flannelled fool” and “muddied oaf” and scourged them with the heat of his rhetoric. Because he, like Gallio, “cared for none of these things,” and spoke with scorn of those dullards, who never even play either game, his protest was called an “insult to national sport.” A sport that largely consists of smoking cheap cigarettes and consuming whiskey and soda needed the virile censure which Kipling hurled at it. Then again, he had dared in rather rough and blustering language to tell the people who came “of the blood” a few bare truths about their military and naval inefficiency. It was after these things that the Kipling “bloomings” lost their first bloom.





## CHAPTER VI

### “FROM SEA TO SEA”

The struggles of genius in quest of bread and cheese : The morbid side of Kipling : Chicago and its “vermilion hall” : “Letters of Travel,” 1920 : “Egypt of the Magicians” : The merging of East and West at Cairo : Cairo damsels and the tiger-instinct : “Maaleh” : “A Winter Notebook.”



## CHAPTER VI

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THE struggles and artifices of genius in quest of its bread and cheese are frequently a somewhat affecting spectacle; and we may well understand Kipling's reluctance to issue his old newspaper work in volume form. But in 1900 he decided on this course in order to check the enterprise of the thievish publishers who roved the high seas of literature in search of loot. It was an evil day that forced Kipling, who had written ballads salt with the brine of the sea, and stories salt with immortal tears, to turn up the files of old Indian papers to present a dish made of pepper, mustard, and vinegar, to a critical public. It was good fortune that sent him to see the cities and learn the temper of many people in his early days, but it was bad luck to be forced to publish the impressions of youth many years afterwards. The frantic grabbing for the saleable “goods,” the task always before him of turning these impressions into readable matter at so much a column for English people in India, deprives this work of much of the author's magic. Of course the compulsion of having to serve up “chunks of life” without much reflection was not without its advantages; it kept the raw material in his mind, and gave him a great store to draw on and work up into the finished product of such volumes as “Kim” or “The Seven Seas.”

In the two volumes comprising “From Sea to Sea,” which might be called “Kipling's Odyssey,” there is the

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realism of the penny dreadful as well as the reflections of an elegant writer, with all the airs and graces of prose at his command.

At times Kipling seems to take a fiendish delight in morbid, bizarre and repulsive detail. The interview with the undertaker at Omaha, in which Kipling dwells upon the mysteries of embalming the dead, is fitter for the columns of the *Police Budget* than a noteworthy volume of travel. The general impression produced after reading these nightmare notes is one of disgust, and it reads no better for being garnished with a vulgar and flashy scholarship. Again, take the description of pig-sticking and the shambles of Chicago: the mixture is worse than medicinal, and cannot be taken without a grimace.

He leads us through the slums of the City of Dreadful Night in the company of the Calcutta police, and shows us a herd of fighting, drinking swine running down a steep place to their doom. The material in this chapter impresses the reader with one idea: that it is a terrible thing to be a journalist; how it must warp the soul of a man to bring to every petty adventure the journalistic eye, ever bent upon the business aspect of them; what a distorted vision of all things must in the end abide with him.

What shall be said of Kipling's sketch of how he struck Chicago, and the description of how the cattle are killed in that city? It is alarming, indeed, suddenly to chance upon such a plutonian nightmare, and I defy the lord of dreams to send any more ghastly death-dance to haunt our mortal sleep.

Kipling as the painter of such blood scenes owes his success to the fact that, while we had at that time thrust personal physical warfare almost out of our own lives, there was still enough primitive hellishness in us to leave us fascinated with the recitals of torture. How far cattle-slaughter is a legitimate subject for

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art, and how far a writer may go in his dependence upon that ineradicable instinct which makes suffering interesting to us, are questions not easily to be answered with precision; but there can be no question that Kipling carries the passion too far. He does not even try to soothe the tiger-instinct in us that makes us read the noisome detail of this chapter with interest. He introduces no feeling of pity; the soul of the reader is seared and there is nothing to heal. He seems to delight in the mere portrayal of the suffering of the cattle. Take as one or two examples out of many, his description of how the pigs are suspended by their legs on a kind of overhead railway of death, while “a red man with a knife” jauntily slits their throats, and the blood afterwards falls like heavy tropical rain. Or the flippant way he speaks of how the terrified animals “shrieked and called on their mothers” when they caught sight of the big kitchen sink that was blood red. Interested as we are in the descriptions, we feel that our humanity is being debased. Every noisome detail is drawn out and emphasized: “the pig men were spattered with blood, the cow butchers were bathed in it. . . . The blood ran in muttering gutters . . . and the stench of it in the nostrils bred fear.”

The introduction of the “embodiment of the city of Chicago” in the form of a woman in this “vermilion hall” is a bizarre experiment. We are told that women came sometimes to see this ghastly spectacle, and Kipling describes an encounter with a young woman with scarlet lips and the “attire of a harlot” (to use the words of the author of the Proverbs) who looked upon these things with hard, bold eyes and was not ashamed.

Much of Kipling’s verse and prose is devoted to a passionate protest; frankly, fearlessly denouncing the hinker and the loafer; and the rich loafer he despises more than the poor loafer. Kipling looks upon any man who withholds his service from the Empire as a loafer;

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he is a loafer. Nothing more can be said of him, and nothing worse !

An Arabic proverb from his "New Army in Training" expresses his point of view of the shufflers who failed to lend their strong arms in the Great Adventure in France and Belgium :

To excuse oneself to oneself is human ; but to excuse oneself to one's children is hell.

Like Pitt and Disraeli, Kipling sometimes has felt despair as to his country's habit of muddling through. In these fits of hopelessness he forgot all about art and literature, and turned his attention to preaching. He felt that he must preach. His eagerness to weld all parties into a definite British idealism received rude checks, but the jeers of the mob did not weaken his convictions. Somewhere in the soul of every man, however unecclesiastical his inclinations may be, there is hidden a surreptitious desire to preach to his fellow creatures. The temptation to fall upon the shirker and the excuse-maker, and scourge them with the heat of his rhetoric, becomes irresistible. The tendency to preach had always been with Kipling : we find it in "Departmental Ditties" ; in the passionate protest of his poem "Cleared," and the note of the homilist became marked in the "Jungle Books." Kipling's sermons were forged white hot on the anvil of conviction, and they were immediate and vital in their appeal.

There is a phrase used by Kipling in another connexion which might well be applied to his Muse. It is "A watertight, fireproof, angle-iron, sunk-hinge, time lock, steel face Imperial mind"—nothing extenuating, nothing ashamed of its beliefs, of which the chief is that "at the last great fight of all, Our House will stand together and the pillars will not fall."

Yet he is always conscious of the tragic bill we have



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had to foot for our Empire. This mind that has at once so much common sense, and so deep a sense of honesty, knows full well the tragic cost paid by our conquering race :

*If blood be the price of admiralty,  
If blood be the price of admiralty,  
Lord God, we ha' paid it in !*

In the above lines there is nothing soothing. We feel the pathos of such sacrifice, but Kipling goes further, and in his jubilant song he teaches us to feel the grandeur of it. Who could suggest an approved alteration in arrangement or diction in that noblest of poems “A Song of the English” ? What music, pathos, majesty, and triumph ? What solemn dignity of recitative ! As Holbrook Jackson has written :

In spite of his austerity and his undoubted sense of responsibility, patriotism for him is but a new way of spelling romance. Imperialism is the great adventure, the Empire a new Avalon. . . .

Kipling published a volume of letters of travel in 1920. The first series appeared in *The Times* in 1892, and the book finishes with “Egypt of the Magicians,” which was printed in *Nash's Magazine* in 1913. The dates are a matter of some interest to the Kipling student, for the earliest letters may be compared with those written in Egypt, in order to determine if the Mr. Kipling of 1892, with his “barrack-square ‘Attention ! d—— your eyes !’ ” style, is preferable to the settled farmer of Pook's Hill in Sussex. I think that since Kipling has become lawfully seized and possessed of the charming old house and land in the vale between Burwash and Brightling, he has got a firmer grip on things, and a greater power of handling them. The dishes of pepper, mustard and vinegar which form the impressions of his youth are “bright,” “smart,” and “snappy,” and are

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relieved by many things finely observed, but at the same time they are narcotic. They may be taken in small doses, like newspaper poison or tobacco, in order to divert our attention from the poorness of the beer on the dinner table, but to take the letters "From Tideway to Tideway" in a lump is perilous. It would have much the same effect as though a man smoked forty fat Persian cigarettes and sipped forty glasses of araki. But it is a curious fact that any work of Kipling's that suggests his early violent vitality is still looked upon by many as his best. I read most of the reviews of this volume, and it was the short, sharp, pithy style of his early work which the reviewer picked out for our consideration. Some of the newspaper nibbles are here quoted that the reader may judge the prevalent attitude of the Press on "Letters of Travel."

The sailor in port is the only superior man. To him all matters rare and curious are either "them things" or "them other things." He does not hurry himself, he does not seek adjectives other than those which custom puts into his mouth for all occasions; but the beauty of life penetrates his being insensibly till he gets drunk, falls foul of the local policeman, smites him into the nearest canal, and disposes of the question of treaty revision with a hiccup.

Once upon a time there was a murderer who got off with a life-sentence. What impressed him most, when he had time to think, was the frank boredom of all who took part in the ritual.

"It was just like going to a doctor or a dentist," he explained. "You come to 'em very full of your affairs, and then you discover that it's only part of their daily work to them. I expect," he added, "I should have found it the same if—er—I'd gone on to the finish."

He would have. Break into any new hell or heaven, and you will be met at its well-worn threshold by the bored experts in attendance.

In Madeira once they had a revolution which lasted just long enough for the national poet to compose a national anthem, and then was put down. All that is left of the revolt now is the song that you hear on the twangling naches, the baby-banjoes, of a moonlight night under the banana fronds at the back of Funchal. And the high-pitched nasal refrain of it is "Constituci-oun!"

All things considered, there are only two kinds of men in the world—those who stay at home, and those who do not. The second are the most interesting.

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From the last maxim it can hardly be said that Kipling is consistent in his convictions about the men who stay at home. For in his “Habitation Enforced” we find George Chaplin, American millionaire and globe-trotter, being quietly led by the nose by one Cloke, a stay-at-home Sussex farm-hand. Also in the story “A Matter of Fact,” there appeared a certain contempt for the traveller whose mission it was to make the stay-at-home Britisher sit up, and we find Litchfield A. Kellner, of Dayton, Ohio, in Westminster Abbey, listening to the wings of the dead centuries circling round his head, and despairing of combating the influences peculiar to the sleepy people around him. A similar note is struck in “An Error in the Fourth Dimension.”

But true wayfaring can never be reckoned by the distance a man completes. Travel does not lie in miles or furlongs, but in the heart of the man. It was the proud boast of Thoreau that he had travelled a good deal about Concord!

When Kipling writes of Egypt he grows indeed delightful. His description of the distinct groupings of Egyptian society is as trenchant as it is lucid. To anyone who has moved a little about the Italian, French, Arabic and Greek byways of Cairo life, Kipling's sketch of the Cairenes will make instant appeal. He finds them “lower-voiced, softer-footed, keener-eyed, at ease as gipsies” and “flinging half-words in local argot over shoulders at their friends,” and “understanding on the nod.” We meet the well-to-do French-Arabic woman at the Cairo Races, or at the Casino San Stefano at Alexandria, and we think of her as a lady of culture and refinement. We look into the dark tranquillity of her eyes, and speak of her as a languid, luscious product of the merging of East and West. But it is not until some friend beckons to her, Eastern fashion, “all four fingers flicking downward,” that we think of her

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amber-coloured complexion and her Oriental blood. But the tyranny and cruelty of the East is there always.

It is alarming, indeed, suddenly to chance upon half a dozen Cairo damsels seated about a table at a big pigeon shoot placidly smoking, and gambling on the wholesale slaughter of the birds. It is the tiger-instinct of the East in such women that allows them to look upon these things with hard, bold eyes, and come away without a tremor of pity for the maimed and fluttering pigeons which strew the enclosure.

The dramatis personæ of the "Arabian Nights" to be met with in the old Arab streets of Cairo seems to have touched the Oriental side of Kipling, and rekindled his affection for his brothers of the "flowing trousers and slack slipper." After an afternoon in the streets of the undiluted Orient, where everything is worked according to the upside-down methods of the East, Kipling found himself saying, as perhaps the dead say when they have recovered their wits, "This is my real world again."

The fantastic doctrine that "what has to be will be," the teaching of the land of the Sphinx that forbids all unseemly haste, impresses Kipling all the while, and he sums up this attitude: "Easterns lean and loll and squat and sidle against things as they daunder along. When the feet are bare the whole body thinks. Moreover, it is unseemly to buy or do aught and be done with it. Only people with tight-fitting clothes that need no attention have time for that."

There is one word used by Arab, Jew or Britisher, from Alexandria to Constantinople, which is the epitome of the faith that salaams to the wheel of inevitable necessity. "Maalesh" is the word. Its literal meaning, if it is possible to translate it into the Western equivalent, is "never mind!" You hear that word on the lips of British soldiers in the Barrack Square at Kasr-El-Nil, in the bazaars at Damascus, in the Mosque of Omar at

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Jerusalem. Mothers whisper it to children, and children lisp it back to mothers, and old men, who, like Macbeth, “have ’gun to weary o’ the world,” mutter it as they fall to sleep, and forget to wake again. . . . Maalesh! No matter!

I will conclude with one passage from a “Winter Note Book” that is an extraordinary skilful piece of writing. It is an impression of wind and snow in Canada. Consider the way the travail of the wind-besieged wooden barn is suggested:

At the worst of the storm there is neither heaven nor earth, but only a swizzle into which a man may be brewed. Distances grow to nightmare scale, and that which in the summer was no more than a minute’s bare-headed run, is half an hour’s gasping struggle, each foot won between the lulls. Then do the heavy timbered barns talk like ships in a cross-sea, beam working against beam. The winter’s hay is ribbed over with long lines of snow-dust blown between the boards, and far below in the byre the oxen clash their horns and moan uneasily.”

Ah! Those barns that talk like ships in a cross-sea! Yes, that is perfection of description and compression, indeed! There is magic in that.





## CHAPTER VII

### “ KIM ”

A brief outline of “ Kim ” : Sir Edwin Arnold’s interpretation of the fifth book of the “ Bhagavad-Gita ” : Kim’s prototype : Sir Francis Younghusband on the Tibetans : The original of Lurgan Sahib.



## CHAPTER VII

### “ KIM ”

THE publication of “ Kim ” marks in every way the finest and fullest output of Kipling’s maturity. In point of expression and thought it is, perhaps, a greater achievement than the “ Jungle Books.” “ Captains Courageous,” “ The Light that Failed,” and “ The Naulakha ” cannot be mentioned in the same breath. Kipling had at this time reached the zenith of his fame. In 1899 he was famous. In 1892 he flung, with lavish generosity, the treasures of his genius into the lap of the reader of “ Barrack Room Ballads.” After that the world continued to gasp at Kipling for some years. He had absorbed India. Wherever the English speech was spoken or read his poems and stories had taken a high place. There was not a hill-post in India nor a town in England where there was not a coterie to whom Rudyard Kipling was a familiar friend and a bond of union. In America he had also an equal following, in many regions and conditions.

Yet his complete novels had fallen a little flat when compared with his short stories. Some spiteful critics put the question, “ Can Kipling hold his own as a novel writer ? ” They asked why his short stories were so much more satisfactory in the way of art and why he could not master the architectonics of the novel “ The Light that Failed ” had been labelled in some quarters “ The Book that Failed ” ; “ The Naulakha,” it had been pointed out, contained all the baser forms of journalese,

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and "Captains Courageous" had met with pointed and definite criticism, not only from the fishermen of Gloucester, Mass., but from literary men. It was hinted that the preacher who wrote the "Recessional," the author of the wonderful "Jungle Books," the dreamer of dreams with a genius for guessing the true meanings of them, could not produce a great novel. That he was unable to combine things seen and could not give a long story that inevitable continuity and vital rotundity which turns a succession of episodes into the "Whole of Life." But such reproaches were soon wiped out, for Kipling deliberately accepted the challenge of the cavillers. He answered his critics with a courteous and alluring document. The answer is "Kim," and I fancy that Kipling could not have made a better one. It is not easy to determine whether the record of the Secret Service of India be fact or fiction, history or parable, fairy tale or sermon. But it must be admitted that it is a subject eminently suited to the author's talent; he had lavished on it his best workmanship, and was no doubt greatly aided by his father, Mr. Lockwood Kipling. The characters taking part in the "Great Game" are drawn with a careful and loving pen. The Babu, Hurree Chunder, is a marvel, though Kipling, with his instinct for heightening the effect of this portrait, has made his contrasts a little forced; the Babu requires sub-tones and sidelights on his delightful personality. But the Lama is the most benign and lovable figure in the book; into this character the author has poured the depths of his sympathy. The Afghan horse-dealer, Lurgan, "The Healer of Sick Pearls," and "The Woman of Shamlegh," who is said to be Lispeth of "Plain Tales from the Hills," are, too, all characters to whom we are sorry to say good-bye when the book is finished.

Kimball O'Hara—commonly called Kim—is an orphan, the offspring of an Irish soldier who died of opium and drink. The child is stranded and alone in India, and

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his only friend is Mahbub Ali, a hard-grained blustering horse-dealer, who places great trust in him. His only inheritance seems to be his birth certificate sewn into a leather amulet case, with the legend of an Indian woman who had lived with his father, that one day in his life a red bull on a green field, a colonel, and nine hundred “first-class devils” will be revealed to him.

In the magic circle in which the players of “The Game” move, the horse-dealer is known as C.25, I.B., trusted secret agent of the Indian Government.

The story opens with the meeting of Kim with a Tibetan Lama, who is making a sacred journey through India in the hope of discovering the source of the “River of the Arrow,” which washes away all taint and speckle of sin. We can almost see the saintly old Lama as the author sketches him. See! There he goes! A gentle old fellow in long habit of dingy cloth not unlike horse-blanketing, his rosary, that has clicked millions of times to *Om mane idme om*, clutched in those long, stiff, yellow fingers, his eyes half-closed beneath the grotesque horn-rimmed spectacles, and turned up at the corners “like slits of onyx.” Everybody will endorse the horse-coper’s brief appraisal of Red Hat at the end of the book: “I am not altogether of thy faith . . . but I can still, as the saying is, see holiness beyond the legs of a horse. . . . I call thee a good man—a very good man.

The Lama drew the boy to him partly by bands of love, and partly because the child had never seen anything like the yellow and wrinkled old man before. A seeker after that place where fell the Arrow “walking in humility, as an old man, wise and temperate, illumining knowledge with brilliant insight,” the Lama appealed to the veritable imp’s better nature. With that spontaneous flow of pity inherent in Irish blood, Kim decides to shield and support the friendless old man.

They take the road together, Kim begging food with skill and much cunning, and the holy man bestowing

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his wisdom with lavish generosity on all and sundry whom they meet. As they wander in leisurely fashion, Mahbub Ali makes use of Kim to carry to Umballa a closely folded tissue paper. When he has delivered the note to Colonel Creighton, the head of the service, he hides outside the house, and, by a judicious use of his eyes and ears, discovers that the message is a call to arms for the purpose of putting down a rising in the north. Kim was no ordinary boy, and after mixing with the *Faquirs* in Lahore city for thirteen years he understood this information might prove to be of great value to him. The Lama and Kim resume their journey, and the latter soon turns his information to good account. Kim copied the bearing and manner of the clever *Faquirs*, and went about prophesying a great war with guns and redcoats. He gave the exact number of troops which were to be used, as he had heard it when he hid at the house of Colonel Creighton. In India, where every rascally soothsayer and juggler is worshipped as a god, Kim is looked upon as a being from the "other world." When his prophecy turns out to be true and the troops are sent north, Kim's name is common bazaar-talk. He is regarded as a priest of the gods.

Kim is eventually thrown across the path of his father's old regiment. He sees the "red bull on a green field," which is the regimental badge, and he is filled with curiosity. The regiment claims him, and he is sent to be educated. Kim proves to be a difficult subject, and the chaplains first of all herd the little "Friend of the Stars" with the drummer-boys for his instruction. But the Lama—who is a learned doctor of a lamassery, and also a man with means—offers to pay the expenses of his *chela* that he may go to one of the best schools. In any case the regimental school would not have held the untamable Kim. So he is sent to St. Xavier's College, a great Roman Catholic seat of learning. As the boy goes he meets the Lama in Lucknow, and a most touching



parting takes place. The old man is sad and very weary . . . the glamour of his pilgrimage seems to have vanished for the moment. He turns to his wonderful little *chela* and mutters: “Dost thou love me? Then go, or my heart cracks. . . . I will come again. Surely I will come again. . . .” The boy passes into the college, and the “Gates of Learning” shut with a clang.

Colonel Creighton and Mahbub—the two doughty players of the “Great Game”—have been keeping an eye on Kim, and decided that he is suited in every way to become a player in the Game. The boy is therefore sent from St. Xavier’s to the house of Lurgan to receive instruction. Here he is taught to judge a man’s character by his talk and manners, to scientifically observe and memorize all things about him, and to scoff at all kinds of danger. Lurgan possesses an amazing knowledge of the sorcery of the East, and Kipling uses him as a medium to display to the reader a method of magic that has been employed in India from a remote period. The scene in which a native vessel full of water is shattered into a thousand pieces, and afterwards built up to its original form without showing a blemish, is a fascinating fragment of writing. For the solution of this mysterious occurrence one must dip into the secrets of crystal gazing. Kim hurls the jug, and it is dashed into many pieces. There is no doubt about this; it is really broken. Immediately after the crash Lurgan bids Kim look at it, or rather, at the largest piece, which lay, with water in its curve, in the sunlight. The boy gazes intently, while the man uses hypnotic influence in order to detract his mind from the surrounding impressions of the external world.

“Look! It is coming into shape,” says Lurgan.

It is simply a matter of crystal vision; Kim is crystal-gazing, only the usual glass sphere or polished crystal is replaced by the sparkle of water in the fragment of earthenware. The subconscious contents of the boy’s

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brain are now in action, and are producing day-dreams or hallucinations.

“Look! It is coming into shape,” insists Lurgan.

The object that Kim has centred his thoughts upon has disappeared, and he is lost in darkness; he will now see anything that Lurgan orders him to see.

Historically, crystal-gazing is one of the most ancient branches of magic. We have only to go to the British Museum to glean an idea of how widely it has been practised. The seers of ancient Greece and Rome used crystals, the mirror, or an inky pool of still water. The uncanny art has been, and in some cases still is, practised in Egypt, Assyria, Persia, India, China, and Japan. It survives among the natives of Australia and Madagascar, and in the sixteenth century many exponents were to be found in England and the Continent who, we are told, “were neither charlatans nor fools, but learned men of note.” The famous Doctor Dee (1527-1608) was a notable adherent to this branch of sorcery, and his “shew-stone” is still to be seen at the British Museum.

Kim is thoroughly tested, and gains the praise of one of the cleverest of the secret service men, Babu Hurree Chunder Mookerjee. As an apprentice in the Intelligence Department, Kim rejoins the Lama, and is allowed to go with the holy man upon his quest for the river that sprang from the arrow of Gaudama. Finally Kim helps Hurree Chunder to trick and put to flight two Russian spies. It chanced that the wheel of fate had brought the Babu into the regions across the huddled mountains of the Sewalik range, where Kim and the Lama had wandered. Here, by accident or perhaps design, the Babu met with two foreigners—a Russian and a Frenchman—surveying the territory and occupied in a mysterious political plot.

Hurree Chunder offered his services to them, and at the same time adroitly cursed the British and all their ways. It did not take R.17 of the Ethnological Survey

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long to find certain treasonable papers in their camp. But how would it be possible to break up the spies' camp without help? The appearance of Kim with the Lama at this point helped him out of the difficulty. The Russian officer rudely demanded the chart of the wheel which the Lama had been explaining to them. Of course the old man would have no more thought of parting with his “Wheel of Things” to a chance-met wayfarer than an archbishop would have thought of pawning “the holy vessels of a cathedral.” Besides, the Lama was an abbot and a wealthy one too. He courteously declined to give up his wheel, but said that if he found that the Sahib was a true seeker and of “good understanding” he would draw him another.

But the demand came: “He wishes it now—for money.”

The Lama simply folded up the wheel, and the Russian, failing to see that he was not dealing with a begging mendicant, drew out some rupees and snatched at the “Written Word,” which tore in two with his action.

The Lama's hand went down to his heavy metal pencease—ever the holy man's weapon of defence—but before he could defend himself he received a blow in the face.

The Irish blood in Kim boiled at the insult offered to the holy man, and he rushed in upon the Russian, bearing him down with blows. In the end the foreigners, helped and guided by the courteous and unfaithful Babu, were hustled out of the hill-country by the wrathful coolies, who were also eager to exact vengeance for the affront to the Lama. In the fracas, they left behind, or were robbed of, all the property which they possessed.

Kim lost little time in sorting this over, taking over all the maps and treasonable correspondence as an official of the Indian Survey Department, but their

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camp chattels and private property he contemptuously threw down a precipice. The Lama is much distressed to think that he has been the cause of violence, and sadly retraces his steps to India.

The excessive strain which falls on Kim in ministering to the sick Lama almost breaks his health, but both at length reach friendly shelter.

After many journeys, the old Lama ends his search for the River of the Arrow in a manner in which tears and merriment are equally forced upon the reader. As the end approaches he is much perplexed, and even the wonderful spectacles given to him by the curator of the Wonder House do not enable him to find his river. But a canal (which to his imperfect vision seems to be the river of the quest) attracts him, and he manages to fall into it, only being rescued with much difficulty by Hurree Babu. The darkness and shadows fall around the saintly yellow man, and he is bound by illusions. The parting scenes between him and his *chela* are full of pathos, and the beautiful prose in which Kipling has framed the scene has almost the conviction of fine poetry.

"Thou hast never stept a hair-breadth from the way of obedience. Child, I have lived on thy strength, as an old tree lives on the lime of a new wall," says the Red Lama.

"Thou leanest on me in the body," replies Kim, "but I lean on thee for some other things. Dost know it?"

Yes, we may be certain that the Lama knew. He may not have guessed the many parts he had unconsciously acted in the Great Game. But the reader will notice that his last thoughts were for his faithful *chela*. As his soul drifted towards the deliverance from the "Wheel of Things" he had said: "I shall have safeguarded him through the years."

Then with a smile the saintly Lama crossed those

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hands, which were like carved ivory, and the River of the Arrow gushed forth at his feet.

He had arrived at that stage in which his soul was free from every vestige of delusion and malevolence. Such a man returns no more to this world. His welfare is accomplished, his salvation won. In the abundant literature of the Buddhist movement, whether in the genuine suttas of the Tripitaka or the ancient tales of China and Thibet, many stories may be traced in which it is told how holy men have attained to the highest in this life. Here is an example to be found in “Maha para bibbana Sutta” :

And from immediately after his ordination the venerable Subhadda remained alone and separate, earnest, zealous, and resolved.

And ere long he attained to that supreme goal—Nirvana, the higher life—for the sake of which men go out from all and every household gain and comfort, to become homeless wanderers ; yea, that supreme goal did he himself, and while yet in this visible world, bring himself to the knowledge of, and continue to realize and see face to face. And he became conscious that birth was at an end, that the higher life had been fulfilled, that all that should be done had been accomplished, and that after this present life to which he had attained) there would be none beyond it.

Again, the effect of the breaking of those chains which bound the Lama to the illusory life, is told in Sir Edwin Arnold’s beautiful interpretation of the fifth book of the “Bhagavad-Gita” :

But for whom that darkness of the soul is chased by light, splendid and clear shines manifest the truth as if a Sun of Wisdom sprang to shed its beams at dawn.

Him meditating still, him seeking, with him blended, stayed on him, the souls illuminated take that road which has no turning back—their sins flung off by strength of faith. *Who will may have this light ; who hath it sees.*

He had found his river—yes—but why ? Because he believed in it ; because he was true to it ; because he waited for it, and recognized it when it came. “Kim” is a song of life and hope, but it is a prayer of the maturer



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spirit: "Lord forgive our transgressions; punish us for foolishness, and preserve our dreams!"

Kim, the hero of our story, remains behind, and, as he is so very young when the book ends, it is to be hoped that we shall one day meet him again in a new volume of adventure. The rakish Mahbub has had little chance as yet to seriously try his hand on the boy, and Father Victor may be also waiting to instruct him.

Of all the characters in the book the Lama is best. He embodies all those excellent qualities that make the truly lovable man—reverence, gentleness, pity, and resignation. In the sanctuary of the old Lama's heart, there is the flower of pity which shimmers eternally. To few people, and but seldom, is it given to feel the ecstasy of being utterly alone with the sun and earth as it was given to the Lama. Richard Jefferies, in that wonderful prose poem "The Story of My Heart," tells of the joy that is more permanent than our errors and more sure than our illusions—the joy of the sense of utter loneliness, when the earth held him, and pressed him, and spoke to him, and he felt an emotion that was as if his whole life were poured out in a prayer. Of the Lama, Mr. Cyril Falls has written in his study of Kipling (Martin Secker): "He is no knight of God setting forth to attack wrong, no valiant soldier leading the battle against the legions of Evil. But the holiness of Madame de Guyon and of Fénelon, the doctrines of Quietism, which were in effect those of some of the most venerated saints of the Catholic Church, and notably of Saint Teresa, and not very far from him." If the reader is interested in religious movements, or in the evolution of a soul—an Irish soul at that!—brought into contact with Christianity, Hinduism, Islamism, Buddhism, and the mysterious harmonies of nature, he will find ample food for reflection in this volume. The arguments which take place between Bennett, the Puritan chaplain, and Father Victor, are full of quiet humour and suggestion.



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Men who live in the lonely outposts of the Empire, where the petty intolerances of this country are unknown, will appreciate the remark that “ whenever the Church of England dealt with a human problem she was very likely to call in the Church of Rome.”

Kim has his prototype. Before Kimball O'Hara comes Tim Doolan. According to the editor of a Darjeeling newspaper called the *Pall Mall*, Kipling's boy hero is no other than the son of an Irish soldier, Doolan, who, during the Indian Mutiny of 1857, eloped with a beautiful Tibetan girl. A wing of a British regiment had been stationed at the sunless heights of Seneshall, a peak of the Himalayas, not far from Darjeeling, and one morning Sergeant Doolan was missing. He had crossed the frontier with the native girl to live with her people. No man ever met the soldier again, but after twenty years had passed, the Indian police arrested in Darjeeling market-place a strange boy with very fair complexion, blue eyes, and light hair, on a charge of murder. Papers sewn up in a leather case of Tibetan workmanship were found suspended from his neck. The British authorities found that they established the boy's origin and identity—he was the son of the missing Sergeant Doolan. The boy spoke only in the tongue of the Tibetan, and, like Kipling's Kim, looked upon the papers in the case as a charm. His father's service rifle and part of his equipment were found in Doolan's hut afterwards. The poor half-caste boy's amulet, however, did not save him, for he was executed for murder. The story is well known in India, and it may be quite possible that Kipling created Kim from that scant material.

Sir Francis Younghusband says that the Tibetans, though they have such a reputation for seclusiveness, are not by nature unsociable. The courageous Japanese traveller Kawaguchi, himself a Buddhist, who lived in the Sera Monastery at Tibet, says that they were

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originally a people highly hospitable to strangers. This more natural sentiment was, he remarks, weakened by dread that Buddhism would be destroyed and replaced by Christianity with the influx of foreigners. The Tibetans also feared that the British sought their gold-mines, and were prejudiced against us on account of our subjugation of India. The Government of China, probably prompted by some secret policy, warned the Tibetans not to open their gates to the British. But we must remember that the Chinese have often rendered great services to the Tibetans in repelling their foes, and in 1792 a Chinese officer made a wonderful forced march with his troops over many lofty passes to expel the Gurkha invasion.

Mr. Edmund Candler, in his book "The Unveiling of Lhasa," says that the Lamas appeared to him to be gross and sottish, and few could be compared to Kipling's gentle old Lama in "Kim." "Most of them," he says, "showed cruelty and cunning in their features, some were almost simian in appearance, and looked as if they could not harbour a thought that was not animal or sensual. They waddled in their walk, and their right arms, exposed from the shoulder, looked soft and flabby, as if they had never done an honest day's work in their lives."

Sir Francis Younghusband, in a vivid description of the Jo Khang Temple,\* has pointed out that dirt is excessively prevalent within this building, and the smell of putrid butter used in the services is very offensive. The candlesticks, vases, and ceremonial utensils, are of solid gold and of beautiful design. The original temple was built about A.D. 650, but has been added to from time to time, and now stands a confused pile without

\* "India and Tibet: A History of the relations which have subsisted between the two countries from the time of Warren Hastings to 1910; with a particular account of the Mission to Lhasa of 1904." (John Murray, London, 1910.)

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symmetry, “and devoid of any single complete architectural idea.” The stone pavements have been worn by the feet of innumerable pilgrims, who for a thousand years have wandered from far-off lands to prostrate themselves before the benign and peaceful Buddha. Here, in the far recesses, the profound booming of great drums, the chanting of the monks, the blare of trumpets, the clash of cymbals, and the long rolling of lighter drums with masterly rhythm, break in upon the audience. Sir Francis Younghusband says that it was not until he came to see the people at a service in this grotesque cathedral that he found the true inner spirit of the Tibetans, or at least the source from which they drew that spirit. It appears that the monks express all moods of joy and sadness in their deep rhythmic droning of chants, and the throbbing and growling of drums. By the drum the Tibetan hypnotizes his audience and himself.

The Ngpak-pas, or miracle workers, the descendants of the Lamas who made magic, are supposed to possess hereditary secrets and are held in great awe. Sir Francis Younghusband pointed out that the Tibetans showed such practical faith in the efficacy of the charms of these miracle-workers, that they rushed right up to the rifles of our troops, believing that our bullets could do them no harm. Of all the Tibetans Sir Francis Younghusband met, the Ti Rimpoche—Chief Doctor of Divinity and Metaphysics—more nearly approached Kipling’s Lama in “Kim” than any other. He was full of kindness, and presented each of the English officers with an image of Buddha, remarking that whenever he looked upon an image of Buddha he thought only of peace, and that he hoped that whenever they looked upon it they would think kindly of Tibet.

The original of Kipling’s Lurgan Sahib was Mr. A. M. Jacob, a jeweller of Simla, who had an almost uncanny knowledge of precious stones. The following

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extract from *The Times*, January 17, 1921, gives some sidelights on his strange personality :

Mr. A. M. Jacob, Kipling's "Lurgan Sahib" in "Kim," won his way from slavery to fame and immense wealth, but died in obscurity and poverty at Bombay at the age of 71. Mystery surrounds the origin as well as many features of his career. He was generally believed to be either a Polish or Armenian Jew, but claimed to be a Turk, and was born near Constantinople. He was of the humblest origin, and when 10 years old was sold as a slave to a rich pasha, who, discovering the boy's uncommon abilities, made a student of him. He thus acquired the foundation of his wide knowledge of Eastern life, language, art, literature, philosophy, and occultism, which in later years made him a great influence at Simla and a most valuable helper of the political secret service. On gaining manumission on the death of his master in early manhood he made the pilgrimage to Mecca in disguise and worked a passage from Jeddah to Bombay, where he landed with hardly enough in his pocket for his next meal. He soon obtained a clerkship to a great nobleman at the Nizam's Court in Hyderabad, and a year or two later a successful deal with a precious stone led him to go to Delhi, where he set up a business in this line. He rapidly made money. Not finding sufficient scope there, he removed to Simla. His unrivalled knowledge of precious stones gave him a remarkable clientèle of the highest in the land. He was endowed by nature with a wonderfully handsome face and form, and there was about him a compelling magnetism, and power and mystery, which led to his being sought for conversation and advice by viceroys and princes. Belvedere, his Simla home, furnished in the most lavish Oriental style and filled with priceless ornaments, was thronged by a succession of notable visitors. Yet his own habits of life were ascetic almost to the verge of sternness. He was a vegetarian, teetotaler and non-smoker. A Viceroy is reported to have said of him that he "lived like a skeleton in a jewel room." As a matter of fact, his deepest interests were in philosophy, astrology, and the occult. His "miracles" astonished his guests, and even the late Mme. Blavatsky had to admit his superiority in providing at will supernatural phenomena.

The collapse of his fortune, according to him, was as follows. Hearing that the "Imperial diamond" was for sale in England, he went to the late Nizam of Hyderabad and obtained an offer of Rs. 46 lakhs. He obtained Rs. 20 lakhs on account, and finding that he could obtain the stone for less than Rs. 23 lakhs, he at once paid the amount. Mr. Jacob always alleged that it was owing to a personal intrigue against him that a high dignitary in Hyderabad, acting for the Government of India, brought pressure to bear on the Nizam, whose finances were at that time in an unsatisfactory state, to renounce the transaction. Mr. Jacob was sued for the return of the Rs. 20 lakhs, and was criminally indicted

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on a charge of cheating. After a trial lasting 57 days he was acquitted, but his legal expenses were enormous. He claimed that ultimately the Nizam agreed to pay Rs. 17 lakhs for the diamond, but this, as well as some other large liabilities by Indian Durbars, could not be obtained by legal process in British Courts, as they have no jurisdiction over the ruling Princes.

Accordingly at the age of 55 he went to Bombay a ruined man, earning a scanty living for some years as a dealer in old china, but retaining his cheerful and alert characteristics and sustained by a philosophy of life which gave him unshaken faith in immortality.





## CHAPTER VIII

### TALES OF HORROR AND TERROR

The occult world : " The House Surgeon " : An outline of the story : " The Return of Imray " : " Bertram and Bimi " : " The Mark of the Beast."



## CHAPTER VIII

### TALES OF HORROR AND TERROR

To most of us there is a curious fascination in the occult world. Of course not one man in a million has the courage to admit that he believes in ghosts. It takes more than an average valour to confess to a belief in the supernatural, in fact we are more inclined to "believe and tremble" as the devils of the Scriptures did, without admitting the authority of their belief. It is rather an ancient saying that every other man you meet has a friend who has seen a ghost, but you never meet the man who has actually seen a ghost for himself. Rudyard Kipling, wise man that he is, absolutely evades any out-and-out declaration of a personal belief in ghosts. Though one has an idea that Kipling is half-convinced that there is something in spiritualism, it is very difficult to find any evidence in his works to support this impression. One even recognizes the sly truth in George Moore's "avowal" that Kipling has ever at the back of his head the little triumph of "I know a trick worth two of that." Of course a mere glance at such a story as "The House Surgeon" will convince the most callous and the most casual that he has what cannot be acquired by any trick on earth—the grip on human life. There are no ghosts in Kipling's ghost stories, and this is a very refreshing discovery. We grow a little tired of the "Christmas Annual" blood-stained spectre with accusing eye, and that inexorably-fixed digit pointing

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on to doom. Kipling can write the fascinating tale of terror as well as any writer, but he seems to be able to get the authentic shudder without falling back on Jekyll and Hyde trimmings or Edgar Allan Poe flavourings. The fact is, he has seen that hysterical exaggerations are as unconvincing as barefaced falsehoods. Thus it will be noticed that the "ghost" in "The House Surgeon" is no more or less than a sinister influence which seems to attack the nerves of those who come in conflict with it.

It is as well to give a brief synopsis of this story, since the silence, atmosphere, and depth of it are a great contrast to the heedlessness and vehemence that are so usual in his work. The narrator of the story is asked to spend the week-end at the house of a retired fur merchant, M'Leod by name. Holmescroft, a large two-storied, low, creeper-covered residence, was not exactly haunted, but intermittent waves of an intolerable oppression swept over the whole household, which consisted of the owner, his wife, who is a Greek lady, and the daughter, Miss Thea M'Leod. The sinister influence which seemed to induce depression and even appalling terror was not a new development of neurasthenia or the latest thing in nerve degeneracy, for from the first moment after the narrator had been conducted to his room at Holmescroft, he felt a terrible depression, and quite inexplicably his heart sank. There was an odour of perfumed soap which made the room rather close, and in an attempt to open the window to let in some air, the narrator came very near to falling out. With a wonderful witchery of words, Kipling makes us realize the possibility and truth of the story, and we live in a world of fantastic terrors. The unseen terror first of all starts with a little "grey shadow" which seems to float at an immense distance in the background of the brain. Then Kipling tells of a gloom and darkness which grows swiftly and envelops the narrator, finally terminating in

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a spasm of extreme dread. The description which follows of an "amazed and angry soul" dropping gulf by gulf into the great darkness, is really a marvellous piece of work. Here again we notice that Kipling has the grasp, and the continuity, and the completeness in the psychology of the abnormal, which he often lacks in the psychology of the normal. He is always clever in the vivid delineation of strife in mental moods; some of his phrases in this story are ideal masterpieces of psychological analysis—witness this: "I dwelt on this speculation precisely as a man torments a raging tooth with his tongue . . . once more I heard my brain, which knew what would recur, telegraph to every quarter for help, release or diversion." Note, too, the fine description of the terror working in the mind of the narrator after the sinister wave of darkness had passed over him. After the heat and oppression of his mental strife, he felt that his soul "cowered at the bottom of unclimbable pits." We may forget the pity and the laughter in Kipling's stories, but the horror will be remembered. We do not easily forget the terrors of Jean Valjean wandering in the sewers of Paris, nor Carker's ride in the night, nor the loathsome details of the man afflicted with madness in "The Mark of the Beast."

But to return to the outline of the story. The narrator makes a compact with the M'Leod, owner of the house, to follow up the trouble, and if possible lay the ghost. Kipling's characterization of M'Leod is rather blurred, and this character's constant use of the lingo of Cockayne is needlessly jarring, especially when it is mingled with cunningly ordered words which ring with unmistakable genius. We are rather tempted to imagine that M'Leod with his eternal "ain't it?" would frighten any self-respecting ghost out of his wits. This rather reminds us of Oscar Wilde's story, "The Canterville Ghost," in which an American buys an old English house with a ghost three centuries old, and gives the said ghost so

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many painful American experiences that the poor thing dies from moral shock.

Baxter, the solicitor for the Misses Moultrie, from whom M'Leod purchased the house, is approached, and we are introduced to a man who at first appears to be narrow-souled and joyless, and one suspects that he had tasted of much bitterness. But later on we learn that he is a man with splendid qualities. Being a cousin of the Misses Moultrie, the narrator is able to extract from him that one of the sisters had met her death through a fall from one of the windows of Holmescroft, and that the two living sisters had constantly brooded over the affair, which they looked upon as a case of suicide and consequently a family disgrace. Their minds being concentrated upon the house, and particularly the room from which the sister had dashed to her death, the M'Leods had felt the presence of the constant application of their thoughts. This, with the spirit of poor dead Aggie forlornly wandering about trying to explain that her death-fall from the window was a pure accident, had caused the house to be cursed with "blasting gusts of depression."

The narrator is able to explain to the living sisters that their sister had without doubt fallen from the window in attempting to open it to get some air, and added that he had nearly met the same fate at that very window at Holmescroft. The story concludes with an account of a visit to Holmescroft by the Misses Moultrie, during which they become convinced that they had misjudged poor dead Aggie. Henceforth they would be able to think about her without shame or sorrow. Thus peace is restored, and the great shadow is lifted from the shoulders of the M'Leod family.

This story was originally published in *Harper's Magazine* in two parts during September and October, 1909, with illustrations by F. Walter Taylor. It is reprinted in "Actions and Reactions," and is concluded with some



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very beautiful verses entitled "The Rabbi's Song," in which Kipling explains his ideas of how "the darkness of a mind," be it of the living or the dead, may perplex and cast shadows over an habitation.

It will be noticed, if we care to study the opening words of Kipling's stories, how, over and over again, he strikes into the heart of things right away. Consider, for example, the power of the first few lines of "The Return of Imray." With a few wonderful touches of the pen he "works up" the whole situation, and at the same time grips the attention of the reader: "Imray achieved the impossible. Without warning, for no conceivable motive, in his youth, at the threshold of his career, he chose to disappear from the world—which is to say, the little Indian station where he lived." There we have the essence of the story, and after glancing at the title, which assures us that Imray certainly will return, we are forced to read on to the end. I do not think there is a better example of Kipling's power in holding the reader's attention than this narrative. It is a story of that magic which comes to us from across the "borderland"—from the "dead" as we say. It tells of the disappearance of Imray, whose bungalow is taken by Strickland, of the "Police," a few months afterwards. Strickland, "who knows as much of natives of India as is good for any man," seems to be gifted with a genius for inferring the unknown from the known, and it is not long before he comes to the conclusion that Imray is not so far away as some people would imagine. The policeman's dog, Tietzens, refuses to sleep within the new bungalow, and the narrator of the tale, who has been staying with Strickland, felt that some one was trying to call him by name during the night: some one haunted the house by day and by night—"a fluttering, whispering, bolt-fumbling, lurking, loitering someone."

In the end, Imray's body is found by Strickland in the

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space above the ceiling-cloth of the bungalow, where he has ascended to poke out some snakes.

With that instinct for heightening the effect of a story, Kipling causes Imray's body to shoot down upon the table just after dinner, but then the author has explained that "unpleasantness arrived" to Strickland, "as to dinners to ordinary people."

Bahadur Khan, a servant, confesses to the murder of Imray, whom he said had bewitched his child. The simplicity of Bahadur Khan's defence of his action is exquisite: "He said he was a handsome child and patted him on the head, wherefore my child died. Wherefore I killed Imray Sahib in the twilight." Every touch in this story gives just the very message it was intended it should, and by a deft arrangement of the very simplest elements, Kipling leaves a magic which is above that of "Spirits"—the magic of the artist.

Everything which is morbid seems to attract Kipling in proportion to its morbidity. In some of his stories he seems to have little sense of what is decent, or, indeed, perhaps it would be more correct to say he has a passion for what is not. "Bertram and Bimi" is probably the most loathsome story he has given out from his pen, and only rendered endurable by the obvious fact that it is surcharged with Kipling's astonishing cleverness.

In this story a German—Hans Breitmann—relates how Bertram, a French naturalist, who has specialized in apes, tamed an orang-outang named Bimi, who lived with him like any human being. The animal has been so indulged and petted by the Frenchman that when he tells Breitmann that he is going to marry a pretty half-caste French girl, the latter advises him to kill the marvellous ape, who might be dangerous if jealous. Bertram makes game about his friend's notion. After marriage he neglects the animal, which in a fit of jealousy bursts through the ceiling of a room in which the half-caste girl has locked herself, and tears her limb from

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limb. This seems quite gruesome enough, but Kipling, continuing in this strain, "sets the gilded roof on the horror" by describing how Bimi sits at the same dinner-table as Breitmann and Bertram, with hair on his hands, "all black and thick with—with what had dried on his hands." Bertram then gave the ape sweetened wine and water till he was stupefied, after which he killed the beast with his hands, and subsequently succumbed to wounds himself. Breitmann returns after a walk to find the ape dead and his friend above him. Breitmann "laughed little and low," and seemed quite content.

"Why in the world didn't you help Bertram instead of letting him be killed?" Hans was asked. And he replied, "It was not nice even to mineself dat I should live after I haf seen dat room wid her hole in the thatch, and Bertram, he was her husband."

The *Spectator* called this story "detestable," and another critic said it was "a symptom of unruly imagination." But the truth is there is little imagination to speak of in "Bertram and Bimi," and if one did not know that it came from Kipling's pen we might say it was a symptom of unstrung nerves. The fact is that this is not a tale of an imaginative genius or a disordered brain, but simply a story by a very clever man, who loves making people's flesh creep. Possibly the homicidal ape in "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" suggested Bimi, and there certainly are traces of Poe's thoroughly unhealthy and crapulous genius throughout the whole story. But it does not lend itself to inspiring topics in criticism.

But Poe was not standing at his elbow when he wrote "The Mark of the Beast." This was written by Rudyard Kipling himself, by that man who looked at life with huge and perilous curiosity, who has given to most un-English thoughts a splendidly English dress; who has just missed being one of the greatest poets;

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who has just missed being a mystic. The *Spectator* remarked that this story was "matchless in horror and terror." These words may seem rather extravagant, but after reading this story we are bound to admit that Kipling's power in the blood-curdling narrative is undeniable. Perhaps it is unwholesome and unnatural, and the symptoms of unruly fancies, but it is a masterpiece of vivid description.

It is Kipling's way of presenting the story rather than the tale itself that makes the flesh creep. Even those who are simply bored by his more or less fevered revelling in the loathsome details of a man stricken with hydrophobia, can appreciate the subtlety and firmness with which he pursues the thread of the story. Here is the outline of it. A reveller in company with Strickland of the Police and the narrator, returning from some place of entertainment, slips away from his companions and enters the temple of Hanumann, the Monkey-god, where he affronts the keeper of effigy by grinding the burning butt of his cigar into its forehead. "Mark of the B-beasht! I made it. Ishn't it fine?" he says.

Instantly the people of the temple are roused to frenzy, and things look very threatening for Fleet, who, muddled with drink, is sprawling on the floor of the temple. A Silver Man without loin-cloth, "a leper as white as snow," springs towards the Sahib, throws his arms about him and nuzzles his faceless head upon his breast. After this the crowd opened before the intruders, and they return in peace. Strickland looks upon the sudden calming of the people as a bad sign. "They should have mauled us," he remarked.

Next morning Fleet discovers a mark like the rosette on the hide of a leopard on his breast. He demands chops—bloody chops—for his breakfast, and devours them with all the mannerisms of an animal. When he goes to the stables to inspect the horses the animals are at once seized with a frenzy of fear—"they reared and



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screamed, and nearly tore up the pickets; they sweated and shivered and lathered, and were distraught with fear."

Strickland discovers that the animals fear Fleet, for when he returns to the stable alone there is no sign of any commotion. Subsequently the fear, on the part of animals whilst in Fleet's presence, is again indicated, for his pony will not allow him to come near. Strickland and the narrator leave him to sleep while they exercise their horses. On their return the animals again become restive when they approach the house. Their fear is not prompted by imagination, for there is something dreadful grovelling in the bushes—something with green eyes. Of course it is Fleet, or, rather, the thing that once was Fleet. They drag him back to the house, and he at once returns to his room, where they hear him moving about and howling like a wolf.

Strickland and the narrator listening from outside the room, furnishes Kipling with the chance to bring his vivid imagination into play. Kipling can concentrate not merely his own mind, but also the minds of his readers. Most men have that instinct that prompts fear; for it is the one instinct that passes to us from our ancestors—the instinct of life-preservation itself. But over and above this instinct some men have imagination—graphic, intense imagination. That is what Kipling seeks to waken first of all, and then he builds upon it, adding and adding to it until he creates a grand structure of horror. "People write and talk lightly of blood running cold, and hair standing up," he writes. "Both sensations are too horrible to be trifled with." "My heart stopped as though a knife had been driven through it." Somewhere across the fields and the dusk, Fleet's howl is answered by another howl. And Kipling remarks: "That set the gilded roof on the horror."

They wait no longer, but rush into Fleet's room, and are just in time to keep him from crawling out of the

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window to answer the call of the "Thing" out in the dusk. They bind him with the leather punkah-ropes, and he snarls at them like a wolf. A doctor is called in and certifies that the man is dying from rabies. Nothing can save him: the doctor can only pronounce that he is dying fast: without can be heard a mewling like the mewling of the she-otter. This mewling seems to goad Fleet to fresh paroxysms of madness, and his strength begins to desert him. Foam issues from his mouth after each fresh attack.

The tell-tale mewling of the "Thing" outside leads Strickland and his friend to lie in wait by the door. After a terrible struggle they catch the Silver Man, who is dragged into the room where Fleet is dying. The latter twists and doubles up as if he has been poisoned with strychnine. They bind the leper, and Strickland remarks: "Now we will ask him to cure the case." The barrels of a gun are thrust into the fire to heat, and after a few minutes Strickland seizes them with a towel wrapped round his hand. Kipling says that what followed is not to be printed. However, the Silver Man is forced to remove his evil spell, and Fleet falls asleep. The leper is then allowed to go. This seems to be the weakest part of the story, since Kipling has ascribed to the Silver Man certain occult powers: once free, he would not fail to use them upon Fleet again. The leper should have been shot.

When Fleet wakes next morning he has no recollection of his doings since he "mixed his drinks last night." The intervening day is lost to him. But when he came down into the dining-room he sniffed, and remarked to Strickland: "Horrid doggy smell . . . you should really keep those terriers of yours in better order."



## CHAPTER IX

### THE SOUL OF SUSSEX

“Marklake Witches” : Sussex Witches: Puck Hill and old Molly the Witch : The Ettrick Shepherd : “The King’s Task” : Independent and stubborn Sussex spirit : A Burwash iron-founder and Wealden astuteness : “The very old ’un” : The Sussex Farmer and poor simple Satan : Old Farm Houses : Kipling and Chesterton : “An Habitation Enforced” : “Dymchurch Flit” : Pharisees : “All the fairies’ evidence” : Brookland Church : A legend of a bell-tower : Shepherds : A true Sussex rustic, and some passages from his life : An odd-fashioned woman and her burial : Beer and Gala Days : Bread and Beer at Sussex Funerals : Henry Fitzherbert and his will : The Flint Man : “The Sheep are the People !” : “Friendly Brook” : “My Son’s Wife.”



## CHAPTER IX

### THE SOUL OF SUSSEX

MODERN means of travel are no doubt serviceable to modern ends. They enable one, where the world grows less picturesque, to spin through it more rapidly. But in order to find what things of antique beauty and interest survive upon this changing earth, it is well to seek them on foot, with staff and wallet, in the old way. At least, those pilgrims who hold to the traditions of their order fancy that in their ancient habit of wayfaring they obtain certain advantages over the modern sight-seer. Sussex, for instance, is now become a place of common resort ; but few travellers ever penetrate into the strange mediæval country round about Dallington, Burwash Weald and Brightling, which has served as a background for so many of Rudyard Kipling's stories and songs. It is the mysterious land traversed by neither high-roads nor railways. Only by unfrequented bridle-tracks, and lanes dipping below banks of undergrowth, does one light upon these little "bits" of England, which are still bathed in the atmosphere of the Middle Ages. Here you may still trace smugglers' tracks amid the oak trees of the Wealden clay, or in the soft yellow sandstone and chalk of the Downs.

In these quiet corners lurk many remnants of faded creeds, and ancient usages. Here at Marklye and Rushlake Green, towards the south behind Dallington—the scene of Kipling's story "Marklake Witches"—the belief in witchcraft holds its ground very firmly.

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Many are the stories of Sussex witches that have from time to time been circulated, but I do not think there is any stranger story than that related to me, some years ago, by the aged sexton of Burwash Church one evening in the smoking-room of the Bell Inn, which stands opposite.

The sexton's tale was to the effect that a large hare which haunted this neighbourhood had on numberless occasions baffled the hounds, or carried off, unhurt, incredible quantities of shot. One luckless day it crossed the path of a party of keen sportsmen, near Puck Hill, who followed it up with great determination and fired several rounds with the usual want of success. Before relinquishing the chase, one of them, who considered the animal as something beyond an ordinary hare, suggested the trial of silver bullets, and, accordingly, silver coins were beaten into slugs for this purpose. The hare was again seen, fired at, and, this time, wounded, though not so effectually as to prevent its running round the brow of the hill, and disappearing among the bushes. In searching for the hare, they discovered instead old Molly, a village witch, crouched under a shelving rock, panting and flushed by the long chase. From that day forward she had a limp in her gait.

The counterpart of this story appears in the notes to the Ettrick Shepherd's Poems. A boy there offers to start a hare if the sportsmen will give him a guinea and the black greyhound to hold. The guinea was paid and a hare started, but the hounds were baffled and gave up the chase, when one of the party suddenly cut the leash which held the black greyhound. At this mischance the boy lost all caution and all recollection, and cried out, "Huy, mither, rin! hay, rin, ye auld witch, if ever ye ran i' your life! rin, mither, rin!"

Rudyard Kipling has seized and set out in an arresting and vivid manner the independent and stubborn spirit of the sons of the Downs and Weald in his poem "The King's Task":

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*After the sack of the City, when Rome was sunk to a name,  
In the years when the Lights were darkened, or ever Saint Wilfrid came,  
Low on the borders of Britain, the ancient poets sing,  
Between the cliff and the forest there ruled a Saxon king.*

*Stubborn all were his people, a stark and a jealous horde—  
Not to be schooled by the cudgel, scarce to be cowed by the sword;  
Blithe to turn at their pleasure, bitter to cross in their mood,  
And set on the ways of their choosing as the hogs of Andred's Wood. . . .*

Many people look upon this particular form of Sussex stubbornness as "stupidity," but the countryman often wins through in his slow way. Indeed, among the quiet, laborious people of the country-side, busy amid the doings of nature, one often finds more wisdom to the peck than among whole cities full of cleverness and modernity. Apropos of Wealden astuteness, there is a tradition that a particularly griping furnace master at Burwash (who built the house where Rudyard Kipling now lives) promised his men "Christmas fare as long as the oak-log lasted." The Sussex furnace men, who were always able to take care of themselves—for all they call it Silly Sussex—laid their heads together, sought out the biggest, gnarliest oak upon the estate, cut a huge log from it, soaked it in the little Dudwell down by Willingford Bridge for a week, then rolled it in triumph to Batemans, and laid it behind the firedogs. There it hissed and fumed and spluttered for a good fourteen days—until two nights after Twelfth Night some say—in spite of all the ash sticks, faggots, and dry twiggy wood the master of the old manor house piled upon it. A grim old Sussex fellow was the iron-founder, and he did not wink an eyelid, and being waggish withal, he saw the humour of the situation, and rewarded his men for thus outwitting him with a great supper and an extra measure of ale all round. But he did not mention the log. That was Sussex—"Seely Sussex for everlastin'!"

A firm belief in "the very old 'un," as a real and

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ever-present personage, was at one time a most distinctive article of the rustic creed. "I feels bad; and yet I can't say *how* I feels," an old lady would say to her neighbour. "You depent on it, dear, that's that 'ere old Satan a-trying of ye," the sympathising friend would reply. However, one popular story of the "very old 'un," which throws a little light on the "Wealen formation of human nature" is too good to pass over.

Once upon a time Satan asserted a claim to a field which had been hitherto in the possession of a farmer; and after a great deal of disputing, they came to an arrangement by agreeing to divide its produce between them. At seed time, the farmer asks "the old 'un" what part of the crop he will have, "tops or bottoms." "Bottoms," said the spirit: upon which the crafty farmer sows the field with wheat, so that when harvest arrives the corn falls to his share, while the "poor man" is obliged to content himself with the stubble. Next year the "old 'un," finding he had made such an unfortunate selection in the bottoms, chose the tops; whereupon cunning Hodge set the field with turnips, thus again outwitting the simple claimant. Tired of this unprofitable farming, the Devil agrees to hazard his claims on a mowing-match, thinking that his supernatural strength would give him an easy victory; but before the day of meeting, the cunning earth-tiller procures a number of iron bars which he stows among the grass to be mown by his opponent; and when the trial commences, the unsuspecting Satan finds his progress retarded by his scythe coming into contact with these obstacles, which he takes to be some very hard—very hard—species of dock. "Mortal hard docks, these," said he; "Nation hard docks!" His blunted scythe soon brings him to a standstill, and as, in such cases, it is not allowed for one to sharpen without the other, he turns to his antagonist, now far ahead, and inquires, in a tone of despair, "When d'ye wiffle-waffle (whet), mate?"



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"Waffle!" said the farmer, with a well-feigned stare of amazement, "O, about noon mebbby." "Then," said the despairing Devil, "that thief of a Christian has done me"; and so saying, he disappeared and was never heard of more.

Inside the old Sussex farmhouses there is much that belong to other days than these. Some of the wide chimneys still remain, with a stone seat on each side, and sometimes there are iron dogs and a wood fire burning on the low hearth. The old iron "hangers" for pots are very common.

Oak dressers, and oak settles, which were a necessity in the great draughty rooms, are becoming rare. Sometimes one may see a four-post bed, with oak-panelled back and top, but these are now rare. "Forty year ago," said old Wybarne the farmer to me, "there was dunnamany (don't know how many) of them gurt ole four-poster beds about here, but the London dealers got a notion o' making 'antique' furniture out on 'em, and so they was all snapped up, surelie!"

The real old Sussex dialect has survived in old Wybarne, and he shows a remarkable ingenuity in aptly coining words of his own. "No, sir," said he to the vicar, who was rebuking him on account of his son, who had been caught stealing apples, "my boy is no runagate, and he'd never get into trouble by hisself; 'tis the other lads as *decoyduckes* of him away."

It must no longer be possible to say that "the literary geography of Kipling would be everywhere save where the distinguished writer's forbears dwelt," as William Sharp remarked, or that "he lacks altogether the faculty of attaching himself to any cause or community finally and tragically," as Mr. Chesterton has informed us. Both of these remarks are singularly inaccurate. We now know that the author has finally and irrevocably attached himself to a certain part of England. No! Kipling may have once been called "The Man from

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Nowhere," but he cannot be regarded as the Man without a Country, for the lot has fallen to him in "a fair ground—Yea, Sussex by the Sea." Kipling's worship of England is of a distinctly ritualistic type, and dispels at once Mr. Chesterton's conflicting remarks that he is "naturally a cosmopolitan," and that he displays a lack of patriotism. Such verse as the author has given in his beautiful tribute to Sussex in "The Five Nations" is more than love for England, it rises to passion. The verses are wreathed with Sussex incense and starred with Sussex tapers. There is a little-known letter written by Kipling to a motoring friend, which shows the author to be an infatuated admirer of rural England :

To me it is a land of stupefying marvels and mysteries ; and a day in the car in an English county is a day in some fairy museum where all the exhibits are alive and real and yet none the less delightfully mixed up with books. For instance, in six hours I can go from the land of the "Ingoldsby Legends" by way of the Norman Conquest and the Baron's War into Richard Jefferies' country, and so through the Regency, one of Arthur Young's less known tours, and "Celia's Arbour," into Gilbert White's territory. On a morning I have seen the Assizes, javelin-men and all, come into a cathedral town ; by noon I was skirting a new-built convent for expelled French nuns ; before sundown I was watching the Channel Fleet off Selsea Bill, and after dark I nearly broke a fox's back on a Roman road. You who were born and bred in the land naturally take such trifles for granted, but to me it is still miraculous that if I want petrol in a hurry I must either pass the place where Sir John Lade lived or the garden where Jack Cade was killed. In Africa one has only to put the miles under and go on ; but in England the dead, twelve-coffin deep, clutch hold of my wheels at every turn, till I sometimes wonder that the very road does not bleed. *That* is the real joy of motoring—the exploration of my amazing England.

Yes, I still think that England holds a very foremost position in Kipling's affections. The little details in country life and in nature attract Kipling surprisingly, and we find in his "An Habitation Enforced" how George Chapin, American multi-millionaire, feels the call of the Old Country.

Chapin, an overworked and broken-down American,

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and his wife Sophie are the principal characters. The doctors have just informed him that his nervous complaint will end in a speedy death unless he stops work at once. At the moment when he is stricken down with this malady of the soul, his career had just reached the culminating moment when he was going to break up all opposition, and rule the greater part of America with the iron hand. Thus, by the interception of the divine janitor, he is cheated of his plunder. The doctors' command must be obeyed, and Chapin and his wife set out for Europe. They can find no rest for their souls on the Continent; not even the enchanted gardens of Italy can hold them, and the millionaire still yearns for the traffic and barter of the market-place. They see everything that is to be seen; they go everywhere at the bidding of guide-books and fellow-travellers; only at last in England, in a village in the southern counties, do they attain that peace of the soul which all along they have been seeking. So the millionaire, who has been accustomed to the boldest operations on money markets of the world, is bewitched by the Old Country. He becomes a simple English country gentleman, loving the slow and quaint workings of the village mind. And here, in the quiet old world, all the good things of life which the bustling new world denied them, came to their aid—health, rest, and parentage. “They have returned as strangers: they shall remain as sons.” Indeed, the old house which they have purchased has an eternal allure-ment, for it seems that, led by a star of accident, they had found the very estate that was once owned by their forbears. As I have hinted, a son is born to them, and thus does an old rustic lecture the sometime financier on the distinction between the temporary and the enduring. It is a discussion over the building of a bridge across a brook in the Gale Anstey Woods. Chapin is in favour of the New York slapdash way with a few pine planks, but the old farmer remarks:

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"You can put up larch and make a temp'ry job; and by the time the young master's married, it'll have to be done again. Now, I've brought down a couple of as sweet six-by-eight oak timbers as we've ever drawn. You put 'em in, an' it's off your mind for good an' all. T'other way . . . he'll no sooner be married . . . 'ave it all to do again."

Mr. I. S. Cobb, in the *New York Evening Post*, tells how Kipling takes a great pleasure in the trivial little objects and customs of rustic life—those simple things that are best of all.

"On a walk after lunch, Mr. Cobb remarked the number and the tameness of the pheasants, and the little English robins.

"Ah! you know birds," said Kipling. "I don't know birds so well, though I'm fond of them. I wish you would stay until after dinner," he went on, "I'd like you to hear a nightingale that comes every evening to our garden. I know all the popular illusions about the nightingale; but the truth is, he's a blackguard with a gift of music in his throat that he can't control—a noisy swashbuckling blackguard of the garden. He comes here at night and he proceeds to abuse all his enemies for all he's worth. It's feathered profanity in a disguise of harmony, and he gets so worked up over it, that he finally ends in an inarticulate gurgle."

On a walk in the garden they came upon a mason adjusting a grape-vine trellis in a concrete block about five feet below the surface of the ground.

"Do you see how substantially he's doing that?" said Kipling. "That should be interesting to an American, who is used to seeing things done in a hurry. But here in Sussex they build for the ages. Once I asked a man why he ploughed so deeply, and I asked this mason why he went as far as five feet down for his concrete foundation when two feet or three feet would do, and they both made the same answer—a phrase that



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have learned since is commonly in use in Sussex, like an adage or motto. 'We do it this way,' they said, 'for the honour of the land.' I thought that had a fine sound—a deference to the soil that nourished them, like a son patting his mother's cheek."

In his story "Dymchurch Flit" Rudyard Kipling has pointed out that the Sussex man's belief in the Pharisees (Fairies) is far from dead, though the people of the present generation hold it by a far slighter tenure than their forefathers did, and are aware that Pharisees are now fair objects of ridicule, whatever they formerly were. Hobden, the oast-house labourer, in Kipling's story, looks upon "all the fairies' evidence" as a "passel of no-sense talk," but he is very careful to throw the "good piece" of a potato out of his door just as the dusk came on.

I remember one old Sussex lady in particular who was a firm believer in Pharisees; and I remember her indignant reply when a friend of mine ventured to hint a doubt: "What! not believe in 'em, when my poor mother, as was deaf and dumb, had been pinched black and blue by 'em." The argument was conclusive at the time, but later I learned that the poor soul's husband, when "in his cups," had been a very spiteful man, and knew more about the pinches on his mother-in-law than the "people of the hills."

Tom Shoesmith, another character in "Dymchurch Flit"—a strong, stalwart man, shrewd enough in things of this world—is also a firm believer in Pharisees. "Imident as rabbits, they was," he says. "They'd dance on the nakid roads in the nakid daytime; they'd flash their liddle green lights along the diks, coming and going, like honest smugglers . . . from Time Everlastin' Beyond, the Pharisees favoured the Marsh above the rest of Old England."

A sidelight is cast upon the marshman's belief in the supernatural in Kipling's "Brookland Road." Here we

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trespass into Kent. Brookland lies about nine miles to the north of Lyd in a country of many waters, and it was in the shadow of the picturesque old village trees in the "midst of a hot June night" that the rustic caught sight of the face of his ghostly love :

*She only smiled and she never spoke,  
She smiled and went away ;  
But when she'd gone my heart was broke,  
And my wits was clean astray.*

Brookland Church has a unique steeple, or three-storied bell tower of massive timber, standing detached on the north side. A legend has been related to me regarding the situation of this steeple on the ground. A group of hard-headed Marshmen, after much haggling and bailing, induced a local builder to erect a steeple to their church at a starvation figure. The builder was so wrathful over their stinginess that he determined to carry out his revenge. He built the tower on the ground, and when the structure was completed he went to the committee and demanded payment. "But we want the steeple on the church, not on the ground," said the spokesman. A smile overspread the builder's face. "Certainly, but you must pay extra. I contracted to build the tower, but no mention was made about position." But not another penny would they pay the builder, and so the tower was left upon the ground till this day.

Hobden, the rustic character, introduced by Kipling into "Puck of Pook's Hill" and other stories, is a wonderful portrait. Just such a man is old Lilburn, and it is interesting to compare him with Kipling's pictures of bygone Sussex life and manners. I spent some days with Lilburn last summer, and I came to the conclusion that there is something in the blood of the Sussex man which is untouched, unalterable—the accumulation of a stubborn and dominant spirit throughout the ages.



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My friend is a shepherd in the upland district a few miles north-west of Bexhill-on-Sea. From Hooe to Romney Marsh the sheep are the chief animate objects, and this district is nearly as famous as the South Downs for its flocks. From the earliest times the smugglers who smuggled wool out of the country, contrary to the strict penal laws against the exportation of fleeces, were more important even than those who smuggled goods inwards; and they had a special designation too. They were "owlers." Old Lilburn would not call himself a "shepherd." Shepherds in this part of Sussex are called "lookers." When the agricultural labourer of this district takes up with "ship" he announces: "I be a-going a-lookinging," "lookinging" being in fact a variety of shepherding peculiar to these surroundings, and the duties of the "looker" require expert understanding of the marsh country as distinct from the Downs.

His ancestors have lived in a certain cottage at Hooe for two hundred and fifty years, and during all that time rent has been regularly paid, which is to say the value of the house has been paid for ten times over. And yet during the last few years when high food prices made his life a terrible struggle for existence he would not leave it, for every stone of the walls, every crack in the paved floors, speaks to him of the dead. When one enters his ancient cottage down a couple of steps, one sees and smells antiquity. A Georgian table stands uneasily on the sloping floor like a modern guest who has dropped in and does not feel at home. The ceiling beams scowl down at this piece of furniture as though anything made within the last two hundred years is a mere impertinence. What are two hundred years to beams which have been in position many centuries, which had grown to maturity in the great Sussex forest long before the polecat, buzzard, and eagle had become extinct?

Lilburn has always seemed to me to be a type of the best Sussex rustic now living in this locality—of poverty

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ennobled. Upright, dignified, an enthusiast over old ale and old songs, he never grumbles or dwells upon the gloomy side of things, although his lot might seem, if a man's life consist in the goods and gear he possesses, hardly better than the sheep he watches.

His theology? It is very like the pantheism of our poets. "If the earth does not call me home" is often on his lips. He has the spirit of place in his soul, and the true spirit of place may have something in it almost of consecration. Anyway, if he has no vivid spiritual experiences, he has a remarkable sense of what is right and fitting. Before his fire a grand specimen of the English setter dog sprawls in one corner, and a "long-dog" (greyhound) sits daintily in the other. When the War forced food prices up, his wife objected to these animals on the score of expense. "Why not exchange 'em for a good pig?" she asked. "There would be just about some sense to that." "Fancy saying that to the sort of chap I be," chuckled old Lilburn, and he took his stick and pretended to look along a gun. Lowering his voice to me as he related the story, he whispered, "I won't use the word as I did use, but it was not fit for fancy-talkin'." "Darn you, woman! I can't go poaching with a pig!"

Many minor interests crowd to my mind when I take up an old Sussex guide book. The very names of the villages are full of charm and phantasy. There is Ticehurst, the wood of the fairy or nymph Tys, and exceedingly mysterious, too, is the raking sound of the waves on the shore at Bulverhythe, which surely foretells a storm. The fishermen say they hear Bulverhythe bells, and the stranger who comes into the county must hear the sounds and thrill, for if he hears them not he will depart the stranger he came. The monastery Wilfred founded at Selsea Isle was submerged, and here again from under the sea rises morn and noon the sound of bells, and we may as well believe it as not. Things have

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changed somewhat in these days, but still Sussex men carry their county with them wherever they go; they do not forget the Spectral Horseman of the Downs, and the fairies of Pook's Hill and Puck Church Parlour; nor do they forget that every little boy and girl born in Sussex is breathed over by the Pharisees.

And now let me say a final word about superstitions. It is not surprising that in the midst of the wide quietness of fields and marshes superstition should still live. Men, as I said, see little of their fellows and much of nature in all its moods. The universe seems very inexpressible when viewed from these levels, man very small under the great expanse of sky, surrounded by the great expanse of blue distance. He gets to feel, I think, that there is much beside men, fur, feather, and fin in the shaws and fields—unseen forces, probabilities, possibilities—and the thought takes shape in inherited superstition. Sometimes superstition leads to humour. Let me tell of a man who had come from Hooe to see the vicar of Pevensey, to ask leave for his wife, a non-parishioner, to be buried in the quiet resting-place by the grey old church. "You see it is her native soil," the rustic explained. The vicar pointed out that Hooe churchyard was the most practical for the ceremony, and instanced the distance and extra expense—and to all this the rustic assented quietly, but with a deep sigh: "My woman," he murmured, "was odd-fashioned, no bounds. She'd like awake, listening for the Pharisees, just before she died. And she did say," and the old fellow shuddered as if he considered it a most disagreeable alternative, "as she'd *come back to me* if she weren't put in her own mould out Pevensey way."

The Sussex man's liking for beer is part of his nature, and ceremonial drinking and gala-days are still a part of the country life. By saying that beer is a part of the Sussex man's nature I do not mean he is a sodden lout, who by abuse of the foaming pewter destroys his body

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and will-power. Not so the Sussex rustic. He loves his ale, but he is of a certain temper of mind which goes to make up the ideal beer-drinker. He has in his soul that amalgam of contemplation, philosophy, content which is a benediction in these days in which the pose point of view, and the smart, cynical, sophisticated attitude is everywhere about us. The Sussex man drinks his ale with great deliberation, and any night you will see him at the inn, smoking, throwing biscuits to his dog, and taking slow draughts of his ale, until his thoughts glide down to the centre of all ideas, the Idea of Content.

Nor is the ceremony of "wetting the baby's head" at Sussex christenings an extinct thing. As for the funeral meats and drinks, the custom of providing them is still kept up, and possibly the peculiar attachment of the lower orders to attending funerals may be a kind of hereditary habit engendered by these entertainments prevalent for so long a period. Some interesting and informing sidelights on the custom of bread and drink at funerals are to be found in some of the ancient wills of the country people. It is touched upon in the will of Henry Fitzherbert, dated 1551. He was a member of an old Sussex family, one of his ancestors having been lord of the manor of Sherrington, while another was mixed up in the fatal sporting affray in Sir Nicholas Pelham's park at Hellingly, where one of the knight's servants was killed. For this affair young Fitzherbert, Lord Dacre, and others were put upon their trial, and though his associates were acquitted, all the efforts of his friends could not save the young peer from the scaffold.

In this will the testator, having given directions for the disposal of his body, orders twenty shillings to be given to the poor at his funeral, together with "a bullock price xvi<sup>s</sup> and brede and drynke"; while for the space of ten years on the anniversary of his burial his executors are to distribute twenty shillings to twenty of the poorest people in Ringmer, and the same in the parishes of



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Cliffe and Glynde, "and a penny a piece upon Good Friday."

\* \* \* \* \*

This is Kipling's Sussex—Kipling's England. So he sees it, and as he believes it will continue to remain. The soil is not a thing that lends itself to financial speculation, or to exploitation to the advantage of the owner. The character of the Flint Man in "The Knife and the Naked Chalk," who helplessly tries to explain why he paid such a terrible penalty for the Magic Knife to guard his land, is the same as Chapin in "An Habitation Enforced," who falls gradually under the influence of his estate in Sussex.

"It is our land," says Chapin's wife. "We can do what we like with it."

"It's not our land. We've only paid for it. We belong to it, and it belongs to the people. *Our* people, they call 'em."

In their love for the land long generations of men seemed to have combined to make, as it were, a wondrous poem, a drama of man's life of consummate workmanship.

"By the Great Kings of the Chalk!" cries Puck to the Flint Man, when he sees that his right eye has been gouged out, "was *that* your price?"

"It was for the sheep. The sheep are the people," said the Flint Man in an ashamed voice. "What else could I have done?"

Rather the land is a legacy of responsibility—a thing which holds and possesses the owner, calling upon him for strength and patience and sacrifice. It demands all the traditional excellence in a man's character, and the dead, twelve-coffin deep,

*Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,*

are always whispering, questioning, and encouraging. We are vassals of the land, and the land is very wise and knows those who are worthy and honest of intention, as

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Kipling has explained at length in his allegorical narrative, "Friendly Brook" (A Diversity of Creatures). The way in which our land and we are interfused and are part of the same thing constantly finds an echo in Kipling's work, and one turns almost instinctively to such a passage as :

*His dead are in the churchyard—thirty generations laid.  
Their names went down in Domesday Book when Domesday Book was made.  
And the passion and the piety and prowess of his line  
Have seeded, rooted, fruited in some land the Law calls mine.*

The virtue of the land appears as a panacea for all troubles in the story called "My Son's Wife." Midmore had "suffered from the disease of the century since his early youth, and before he was thirty he was heavily marked with it. He and a few friends had rearranged Heaven very comfortably, but the reorganisation of Earth, which they called Society, was even greater fun. It demanded Work in the shape of many taxi-rides daily; hours of brilliant talk with brilliant talkers; some sparkling correspondence; a few silences (but on the understanding that their own turn should come soon) while other people expounded philosophies; and a fair number of picture-galleries, tea-fights, concerts, theatres, music-halls, and cinema-shows; the whole trimmed with love-making to women whose hair smelt of cigarette smoke." Midmore has no respect for "the base convention which is styled marriage"; his need of self-expression finds its outlet in other ways.

Then by the death of a relative he inherits an estate in the South of England, and the land begins to cast a charm over him. By degrees he begins to project himself into the intricacies of English country life, and stretch himself out until he has gained some knowledge of the strange and only half-articulate mysticism of Rhoda Dolbie, an old family retainer. The characters he has always looked down upon in Jorrocks—Dickens



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and horsedung he had called them in his early days—now take on a new glamour, and he realized that the red-eyed farmer he had seen bellowing at a landlord for new barns had jumped straight out of one of the pages. On the first night at his new home we take leave of Midmore going to bed with a book called “Handley Cross” under his arm and, as Kipling remarks, “a lonelier Columbus into a stranger world the wet-ringed moon never looked upon.” Then comes the time of floods, when “what is weak will surely go, and what is strong must prove it so”; the floods that

*sweep corruption clean . . .  
That more the meadows may be green . . .  
The crops and cattle shall increase,  
Nor little children shall not cease. . . .*

The brook did “just what it did do once in just so often,” and the water began rising in sudden pulses, and with great sweeps invaded the lowest storey of Midmore’s house. In the harassing days which followed the flooding Midmore discovers in himself the necessity and desire for new physical and intellectual energies—energies which would not be expended on tea-fights, cigarettes, and music-halls. And so the land became knit in with his flesh, and he ended by fulfilling his obligations to the soil which had so cunningly moulded and created him.



## CHAPTER X

### ANIMAL STORIES

Kipling's animal stories : Cats : J. Lockwood Kipling on cats :  
"How the Leopard got his Spots" : Alexandre Dumas père  
and his pet : Jerome K. Jerome : The *Spectator* on "Pussy cat" :  
"The Crab that played with the Sea" : Wolf-reared children :  
Wolf-boy at Mission House of Agra : "Old Man Kangaroo" :  
Quiquern.



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ANY attempt at detailed criticism of the wonderful sketches of animal life in the "Jungle Books," and a host of short stories concerned with nature myths from many sources and various races, would be beyond the scope of this volume. But this survey would certainly be incomplete without a few notes on a variety of matters which appear to bear upon Kipling's animal stories. For the convenience of students and searchers, the titles of a few books from which I have gleaned my notes are given in the footnotes. The countless little phrases Kipling uses in these fables show his point of view—his attitude to the world. They do not come to me in solid chunks of inconsequential description, but in innocent-looking little passages hidden in the practical wisdom of the animal. "The Cat that walked by Himself" in "Just So Stories" is a fine study.

Cats are always interesting, because nobody has yet understood how much affection they are capable of feeling for their human possessors, but in this story the author has certainly put forth a very faithful study. It is an old subject, but remarkably well treated in spite of Kipling's fun and twaddle, entertaining or not, according to the disposition of the reader.

The story opens with Man and Woman living together in a cave. To them came in turn Wild Dog, Wild Horse, and Wild Cow, who in exchange for food make compacts with the cave-dwellers to become respectively First Friend, First Servant, and Giver of Good Food. The

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cat, however, is not to be attracted so easily ; he is curious about the humans in the cave, but declares he will always "walk by himself." The warm milk and a right to sit by the fire is a constant attraction, but his independence will not let him barter his freedom for comfort. The cat despises the dog who will lick the foot that kicks him : for straightforward, level-headed reasoning go to puss. The dog thinks a powerful lot of mere man—there never was such a clever thing as a man, in a dog's opinion ; and he takes good care to bark it to everybody he meets. Naturally enough the Cave Man thought that the dog was a most intellectual animal, and being deluded by his winning manners and the promise to "hunt through the day and guard this cave by the night," he allowed Wild Dog the right to make the cave his home. The Cat was always creeping around the cave eavesdropping, which is a way they have, and when he heard the dog surrender his body and soul for a few roasted mutton bones, Wild Cat looked towards the dog with an expression of disgust on his face that would have made a travelling actor feel ashamed of himself. The cat, you see, had his own opinion about Man and Woman as he has ever since had about all humans. He does not say much, but you can learn enough from his manner to make you glad he can't talk to you. The consequence is that humans put down pussy as an animal without intelligence. Even Kipling is very scathing about the cat, and suggests that he is really incapable of any true affection towards man. When a cat rubs against its master's legs and walks sideways, mews and appears to be transported with joy, it is "only pretend," says Kipling. After all these signs of affection pussy will run out the front door and stay out till the morning light, without another thought to the household ; but the dog "snores at my feet all night, and he is my Firstest Friend." All painfully true, of course, Best Beloved, but pussy has many good and sterling



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traits. We must not allow our prejudice to override our judgment. For level-headed reasoning give me cats ; you can't fool a cat with soft words the same as you can a dog. Pussy is admired by learned men the world over because of his independence and the secrecy of his ways.

Again, cats, like all scholars, are yearners after the silence of the "wild wet woods," and have no fear of the darkness ; if they had not been too proud to bear the yoke, Æolus would have taken them for his couriers in the night. Richelieu, Joachim du Bellay, Tasso, Chateaubriand, Maupassant, Baudelaire and Dumas père all adored cats. In fact, nearly all great men have entertained a very great respect for cats.

But to return to Kipling's story of the "Cat that Walked." The Wild Cat, after the other wild animals had sold themselves to bondage, walked up to the cave to reconnoitre, and he saw the cheery glow of the Cave Woman's fire, and he smelt the smell of warm milk. When the woman looked out of the cave she asked the "Wild Thing" out of the wood what he was doing on her doorstep, and told him to go away. But the crafty pussy assumed an aspect of chastened sorrow, and begged of the woman to give him the chance to show what a wise creature he was. The woman agrees to let the cat share the cave, fire and milk, if she three times praises him. Pussy easily wins the first and second word of praise by soothing the baby, and the third by killing a mouse. From that day till the hour he died the Wild Cat of the Woods was allowed to drink warm milk three times a day, sit by the fire in a drunken stupor all day, and wander about the wild wet woods all night.

If you watch any cat closely, you will see that from time to time he will turn deliberately round and laugh at you. He is chuckling in remembrance of the joke of jokes in the cat world ; you can almost read Kipling's words on the lips :

*Still* I am the cat that walks by himself, and all places are alike to me.

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Generations of devoted cat-lovers in Europe have not been able quite to overcome the tendency of the pussy to run wild. J. Lockwood Kipling says that many a gamekeeper will tell you of cats which, during the day, are models of saintly propriety, and at night are "just prowling tigers." It will be noticed that cats, tigers, leopards, zebras, and giraffes are protectively coloured. Their whole organization is a perfected mechanism for catching and killing living prey by a sudden pounce from a point of vantage. With a few exceptions the background of the coat is a shade of yellow or grey, lightened by black markings forming spots, patches or stripes which render them less conspicuous when creeping along the branch of a tree, or crouching to spring upon their prey.

Kipling deals with the old subject of the protective colouring of animals in "How the Leopard got his Spots" ("Just So Stories"). A leopard of a greyish yellowish colour, and an Ethiopian, not then black, discover that they are daily experiencing more difficulty in catching their dinners and teas. They find that the "game has gone into other spots"; in other words, the animals they have been in the habit of hunting have grown so much like their surroundings that it is impossible to track them down. Thus a giraffe standing in a clump of acacias is practically invisible at a little distance owing to his blotchy coat, which resembles shadows and sunlight streaming through the leaves. Or, take the deer always either spotted with white, the effect of which also resembles that of the sunlight falling in patches, or uniformly dark to accord with the dense forests or jungle which they inhabit.

Of course the yellowish coloured leopard and the Ethiopian can easily be evaded by the other animals because they remain different from their surroundings, so they accordingly proceed to make a little adjustment in their appearances. The Ethiopian blackens his skin,

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and, while the colour is still wet, he puts his fingers on it, and then transfers the impressions to the leopard. 'They then went a-hunting and lived happily ever afterward,' as Kipling says.

The colouring of an animal may be also distinctive. The hindquarters of monkeys and certain herbivora are most conspicuously coloured, and this is the reason: both these classes of animals are apt to dash off suddenly through the dense foliage, and their striking colouring enables any stragglers to keep them in view.

Seemingly Kipling took the idea of the cat story from his father's book on Indian animals.\* Lockwood Kipling sums up the attitude of the cat in a few lines somewhat eloquently. "No creature is more independent than the cat. Its more complete domestication in the West is in reality merely due to its love of warmth. For the sake of comfort it will tolerate humanity and blink amiably at the fireside, but a serene selfishness is the basis of the cat character."

But with all his independent, languid, dilettante ways the cat really does feel affection for humans. Alexandre Dumas père told a very interesting story of a very worthy cat he possessed.

While living in the Rue de L'Ouest in Paris he had a cat called *Mysouff*. Every morning when Dumas went to the office the cat would follow him as far as the Rue Sainte-Honore; farther than that he would not go. Every evening Dumas returned at five o'clock, and every evening would find *Mysouff* sitting waiting for him in the Rue de Vaugirard. The moment the cat saw his master coming he would rub against the side of the wall with joy and walk sideways, with his back arched, along the road. When once their own street was reached, moreover, he would jump up against Dumas' legs exactly like a dog would have done, and continue this until within a few steps of the house, when he made a wild dash to the door. The most curious part of the story, however, is what follows. If by any chance Dumas was dining in town and did not return home at five as usual, it was quite useless to open the front door or call "*Mysouff, Mysouff!*"—the cat would sleep on calmly and not stir.

\* "*Beast and Man in India*" (Macmillan and Co., 1891), chap. xii, *Of Cats*."

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Perhaps one of the best examples of the cat's placid bearing and plain common sense has been noted by Jerome K. Jerome :\*

Now, have you ever noticed a dog at the end of a chain, trying to kill a cat as is sitting washing her face three-quarters of an inch out of his reach ? Of course you have. Well, who's got the sense out of those two ? The cat knows that it ain't in the nature of steel chains to stretch. The dog, who ought, you'd think, to know a durned sight more about 'em than she does, is sure they will if you only bark loud enough.

Of course the cat provides immediate inspiration for nursery rhymes. In an article on this subject in the *Spectator* (November 20, 1909), a writer offers this note on "Pussy cat, Pussy cat, where have you been ?" which seems to bear out Kipling's outlook on the feline world :

The cat, haughty of mien and dainty of person, stalks in at the door with a serene indifference, a superb carriage of head and tail, which suggests royalty at once. Where has the cat been ? To the very hub of things, surely ; to walk apart with princes ; to bring back the air of the palace to the humdrum farm. Yet the cat, for all her queenliness, must be sent about her business ; she is reminded that her sole real achievement at the palace was the terrifying of a mouse. She must be put in her place ; indeed, she must be put into the well. Methods with the cat are direct ; there are more elaborate treatments of less familiar creatures. The frog, like the cat, has an air ; the frog is a gay fellow who comes to a bad end. There is a rakish humanity about the frog ; he has hands and feet, and he can be set walking upright, and he has a yellow waistcoat and tight green trousers and a rolling eye ; he is sent on his voyage wooing, and the duck or the crow finishes him.

"The Crab that Played with the Sea" is founded on the Filipius folk-story which tells of the King Crab that lives at the bottom of the ocean in a big hole. The crab is larger than a hundred buffaloes, and once every day and night it comes up to the surface, looking like a

\* The *Idler* magazine, October, 1892, "Novel Notes." Illustrations by Louis Wain. In this article Mr. Jerome has brought together many anecdotes of cats.



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large island. When it reaches a smooth beach it crawls up to land, and thus causes the waters to pour down into the hole, and the tide to fall low on all the islands. When it gets tired of the shore and retires down into its hole, the waters rush out, and the tide rises.

The story of Pau Amma\*—the king-crab—ranges from Singapore to Torres Straits. The hole he lives in is called Pusat Tasek.

From the story of Romulus and Remus to Kipling's Mowgli, legends of wolf-reared children have been common in all nations. But the original of Kipling's character may have been the wolf-boy discovered by an American lady, who saw him at the age of twenty, at the English Church Mission, Agra, in 1875. This lady described the strange wolf-boy in a book of travels, which was privately printed some years ago. At the age of eight he had been rescued from a wolf's den. He had been seen crawling on all fours in the company of a she-wolf. In the early days of his captivity he howled like a wolf, would eat only raw meat, and continued to move about on his hands and feet. It took years of infinite patience on the part of his manager to teach him the few words he was able to articulate when Mrs. Frances saw him. At that time he still made his wants known mainly by gestures and ejaculations, and his lower jaw was constantly moving. He had a wild look still, but was not "disagreeably ugly," had become quite tame," and appeared to the American lady kindly disposed."

In the ninth volume of the *Journal of the Anthropological Institutes* there are also some notes on the subject of a man with wolf-like characteristics.

Mr. V. Ball, of the Indian Geological Survey, says that this man smelt food when it was offered to him before he would decide whether to eat it or not, and hid any

\* "Malay Magic," by W. W. Skeat, should be consulted for an account of Pau Amma.

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portion of it left over under the straw on which he slept. He could not speak, but made signs, grunted and generally behaved like a wolf.

The sixth of the "Just So Stories" is a tale about Old Man Kangaroo. He is called Boomer, has legs of about equal size, and is discontented and quite inordinately vain. His pride urges him to go to the gods and petition them to make him different from all other animals. The Big God Nqong complies and sets Yellow Dog Ding to chase Boomer into the heart of Australia by which time the kangaroo's hind legs had grown so large that he was different from all other animals.

In the "Jungle Book" we have beast stories pure and simple, and animal stories in which the human element enters as well; and I think that Kipling's power is displayed to the best advantage in the latter. The three first stories, "Mowgli's Brothers," "Kaa's Hunting," and "Tiger, Tiger!" were apparently a development from "In the Rukh"—the delightful jungle sketch which to my mind is the best in "Many Inventions." In this story the author tells the reader of Mowgli's marriage and how the little brown baby born to him is found playing with a wolf.

I think it is true to say that most of the jungle stories are allegorical, and charged with Imperial ideals. For instance, there is the story of a mongoose Rikki-Tikki Tavi, which is presumably written with a purpose. Here you find Kipling's infinite sympathy with the animal (or man) who can do the real fighting. Rikki-Tikki kills three snakes in succession and thereby saves the life of his protector. Rikki-Tikki represents the energetic and honourable English youth, ready at all times to defend the Empire from its enemies. Chuchundra, the musk-rat, is the indifferent and selfish slacker who is waiting to be asked to help. Kipling tells us that "Chuchundra is a broken-hearted little beast" that whimpers and cheeps all the night. He is for ever trying



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to make up his mind to run into the middle of the room, but he never gets there. When Rikki-Tikki informs Chuchundra that he is out to kill a cobra the musk-rat becomes more sorrowful than ever and he cries till the tears roll down his whiskers. "Those who kill snakes get killed by snakes," he sobbed. But Rikki knew that Atlas could never have carried the world had he fixed his thought on the magnitude of the job.

Each of the stories is capped by a sermon in verse, and one of the best poems is "Darjies' Chaunt," which is sung in honour of Rikki-Tikki after his battle with the cobras. The Swinburne influence is easily identifiable with this piece, in which the only difference from the noted metre of "Atalanta" is the poet's use of uniform trochee instead of the alternating iambus.

In "The Second Jungle Book" there is one marvellously clever story, "Quiquern." The author himself, in an epilogue, lets us into the secret of his method. He tells us how one day at Colombo he found a long flat piece of ivory with some pictures scratched on it in "the Inuit style" under some rubbish in a house there. He discovered (or imagined) the history of the ivory piece and interpreted the scratched pictures as a story of adventures passed through in the far North by a youth called Kotuko.

When he [Kotuko] and the girl went north to Ellesmere Land in the year of the Wonderful Open winter, he left the picture-story with Kadlu, who lost it in the shingle when his dog-sleigh broke down one summer on the beach of Lake Metilling at Nikosiring, and there a Lake Inuit found it next spring, and sold it to a man at Imigen, who was interpreter on a Cumberland Sound whaler, and he sold it to Hans Olsen, who was afterwards a quartermaster on board a big steamer that took tourists to the North Cape in Norway. When the tourist season was over the steamer ran between London and Australia, stopping at Ceylon, and there Olsen sold the ivory to a Cingalese jeweller for two imitation sapphires.

From this unpromising material Kipling evolved the story. Quiquern is the phantom of a gigantic dog, and

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Kipling tells us that, like the Spirit Bear, he has several extra pairs of legs—six or eight—and this Thing jumping up and down in the haze had more legs than any real dog needed.

The pair to whom this apparition became visible were Kotuko and a girl who had followed him when he left the starving village, in obedience to a supposed command from a *tornaq*, and with the hope of finding food in the midst of the most cruel of Arctic winters. A clear explanation is given of a *tornaq*. Kotuko, the young Inuit who is the hero of the story, one night halted to lean his back against a boulder. The hunger, darkness, cold, and exposure had told on his strength. He began to hear voices inside his head, and to see people who were not there "out of the tail of his eye." The boulder against which he leaned rolled over, and as he sprang aside to avoid it, the stone slid after him, squeaking and hissing on the ice-slope.

This stone was a *tornaq*—Kotuko was not certain, but he thought so. The stories he had heard in his childhood of a one-eyed Woman-Thing, called a *tornaq*, which lived inside a stone, came to his mind. Perhaps it was going to follow him and ask him to take her for a guardian-spirit!

The *Angekok*, or village sorcerer, helps Kotuko's imagination to frame a veritable message from the *tornait*s (spirits of the stone), and the village people shouted: "The *tornait*s have spoken to Kotuko. They will show him open ice. He will bring us the seal again."

But the reader must turn to the story for the explanation of the "Quiquern," for I am reluctant to rob him of the pleasure of the unexpected *denouement*.

As an example of Kipling's insight into the natures of animals, or, at any rate, his assumption of it, we must read his account of the "Monkey People." Before I read the "Jungle Book" I had supposed the monkey possessed intelligence of a high order and was quite capable of

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being, if not civilized exactly, tamed to man's service. Natives always say that baboons and monkeys can talk, but are afraid to do so within human hearing lest they should be captured and made to work. But Kipling speaks of the "Monkey People" in terms of complete scorn, and when Mowgli talks with the Bandar-log his friends, Baloo and Bagheera, become very angry with him. "Listen, man-cub," says the Bear to Mowgli. "They have no law. They are outcasts. Their way is not our way. They have no remembrance. They boast and chatter and pretend that they are a great people about to do great affairs in the jungle, but the falling of a nut turns their minds to laughter, and all is forgotten." It must be said that Kipling's description of the "Monkey People" seems to be an attempt to expose and ridicule a certain class of English political life. It is a parable much in the same style as "The Mother Hive" in "Actions and Reactions," which is a violent attack on the ideas which are indifferently called "Liberal," "Advanced," and "Progressive." Here is a brief outline of the story of the bees. The stock of the hive is old and overcrowded, and the wax-moth has laid her eggs everywhere, spreading ruin and decay and disease all over the hive, and heretical doctrine amongst the workers. Where bees are too thick for the comb there must be sickness or parasites, and after that chaos. An order is given to make pillars at the entrance to keep out the Death's Head moth. But the idea of a Death's Header making an attack upon the hive is viewed as an impossibility by the indifferent and lazy dwellers in the hive. The downy, day-old bees twiddle their thumbs, cough, and ask, "Is not the building of pillars a waste of wax?" "Do you mean to say that if we trust the Death's Head he will attack us without warning?" "Are not pillars un-English and provocative?" So in the end the hive becomes full of wax-moths and "oddities," who hold "enquiries" and chatter about the joy

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of working amidst the "merry, merry blossoms"—and forget all about the welfare and defence of the hive. Then comes the bee-master, and when he sees that corruption and muddle are rife, he takes the hive and casts it into the fire. In vivid intuition and skill in portraiture this sketch can only be compared with Maeterlinck's "Life of the Bee," both alike animated with the same sympathy, and, perhaps, presenting the same symbolic significance.

As I have already suggested, "In the Rukh" is the stem from which all the other Mowgli stories ultimately flowered. These stories are not directly the outcome of such sketches as "The Walking Delegate" and "The Maltese Cat," although his pre-eminence in that literary model may have helped Kipling to find his final pattern. "In the Rukh" has now been transferred to its proper place at the end of the book in which the adventures of Mowgli are given. After having set before us the impressions that Mowgli and his brothers of the jungle, the wolves, made upon two white men in the Department of Woods, Kipling evidently realized that he had only touched the outer fringe of his subject. He saw how rich it was in its possibilities. The idea urged him to go back to a source nearer the fountain head, and tell of Mowgli's babyhood and jungle education without falling back upon the white man's civilization for balance and ballast to his narrative. There is invention in the early story, and a little imagination. But as Kipling brooded over the outline of it after the story had been given to the world, the true imagination with all its power came to him, and with breathless speed and wonder the jungle and all its inhabitants were flashed before the author's vision. That is the true vision, which transcends mere invention with all its multiplied tricks of the trade. It was revealed to Kipling that the jungle people were governed by laws just as surely as a bank, a hotel, or an Empire is governed by them. It is this portrayal of the



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beasts of the forest subject to a relentless code which explains why the narrative of Mowgli's career fills the reader with a sense of its completeness. Kipling said once, "When I found the Law of the Jungle the rest was easy!"

But the sage of the Jungle is never tedious. His insight, wit, and humour, have bestowed a freshness and gaiety upon the adventures of Mowgli which becomes contagious to the reader. It is the author's mental attitude reflected in Mowgli that animates the whole book. Everybody partakes of it. When the man-cub gets melancholia, the jungle has it and the reader also—the whole world becomes tinted with ultramarine. Kipling is the sworn enemy of the sentimental, but this does not stand in the way of a very human tenderness, which is manifested in many vivid and pathetic little pictures underlying the alert, joyous and breathless life of the Jungle. "Eh?" said Carlyle, when he was reading Tennyson's "Revenge"; "Eh? but he has the grip of it!" The grip of Mowgli is still irresistible, and perhaps the best proof of this is the popularity of the "Jungle Book" all over the world. It is this book which appeals most to our French friends. The troubles and trials of the man-cub, especially his piteous fate during the spring running, when the whole animal world is pervaded by the impulses of love, and the little human boy is left desolate and alone and is impelled to seek out Messua, the woman who has claimed him as a son, is, as a French critic described it, "one of the most beautiful passages ever written by a man of letters."





## CHAPTER XI

### POETRY

Kipling an expander of our language : " The Seven Seas " and a verse from " Omar " : A yearning for wonderful words : A song of the guns : " The Academy " quoted : George Moore's remarks on Kipling : Pierre Loti : The Puritan strain in Kipling : The strenuous life as a cure-all : Carlyle re-vitalized : A " Banjo-Bard " : " The Anchor Song " : Dana's " Sailing Manual " : A sea chantey : " The Ballad of the Clampherdown " : The song of the exiles : " The Gipsy Trail " : " The White Man's Burden " : A reply by Mr. George Lynch : " Departmental Ditties " : " Mary, Pity Women ! " : A corrective note on the poem : Veiled arrogance in " Recessional " : " Pagett, M.P. " : " An Unqualified Pilot " : " The Fires " : The dreamy endurance of the East : Kipling's power with the short lyric : " Cities, Thrones, and Powers " : Sea : Music : " Poseidon's Law " : " The Glory of the Garden."



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ANY writing man who knows the difficulties of the craft will agree with me when I say that Kipling can be compared with Shakespeare and even with Chaucer in regard to the wonderful range of words he uses. He certainly is an expander of our language. The selection of Indian and African words in his poems; the language of the barrack-room; the rough-and-tumble talk of the New England fishermen; the professional slang in such a story as "With the Night Mail," and the jargon of men who rove the seven seas, have added a riot of new force and colour to our language. Again, we have all the phrases of the Indian jungle and swamp life in his collection of animal stories. He has cast into his works queer words and phrases, which have in time come floating back in the everyday speech of the people. Two of his best known phrases are the "Five Nations" and the "Seven Seas." The former phrase is a collective term for the nations which rallied to the Empire's call during the South African War: England, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa. On this occasion Kipling was obliged to leave India out in the cold (not without a certain regret I make sure), but he has given us the story, "A Sahibs' War,"\* in which Um Singh, a trooper of the 141st Punjab Cavalry, presents the Boer War from the Indian point of view.

When "The Seven Seas" was published, people were somewhat puzzled as to the meaning of this title.

\* The third story in "Traffics and Discoveries."

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The inspiration for it has been discovered in "Omar." The phrase occurs in Fitzgerald's translation, the third edition, forty-seventh quatrain :

*When you and I behind the veil are passed,  
Oh, but the long, long while the world shall last !  
Which of our coming and departing heeds  
As the seven seas should heed a pebble cast.*

Kipling, in answer to an editorial request in *T.P.'s Weekly*, has put the question of the meaning of the name of his book to rest once and for all. He has given his verdict as follows :

The Seven Seas are :  
North Atlantic.  
South Atlantic.  
North Pacific.  
South Pacific.  
Arctic Ocean.  
Antarctic Ocean.  
Indian Ocean.

Which Seven Seas include all the lesser ones.

Scrupulous choice and consideration of words is one of the elements that make for greatness in Kipling's books. Every story, every line he writes, is wrought out with great labour. Do not think for a moment that those wonderful combinations of words, each conveying a different and subtle shade of meaning with which he stars that mystical tale "They," flow from his pen without delay or trouble. Those who have tried to learn the magic of words will tell you there is only one way of learning—you have only to be very fond of writing a phrase, a verse or a story over and over again. Does not even the conjurer tell you the same thing? A young man asked the poet Baudelaire how he could learn the magic of writing. "It depends," answered the poet, "on whether you really enjoy reading the dictionary." So it is of no use longing to be a Magician of the Printed Word without longing to work. Kipling,

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one feels certain, has brought into his work that spirit which we in England always prize so highly—a capacity for sticking to the guns.

One might go on writing indefinitely on Kipling's yearning for and use of strange and wonderful words, as one after another his stories recur to the mind. One cannot forget certain of his phrases, they dwell indelibly with us. "A well-dark winding staircase" in the "City of Dreadful Night" brings the required shudder; "a great rose-grown gate in a red wall" brings to the mind the garden that every man remembers, though he may have forgotten many things. Kipling also finds the Bible a very fertile hunting-ground for phrases, and the harmonious mode of speech peculiar to the work of the Hebrew writers may be often traced in his works. In his "School Song"—"Let us now praise famous men"—he has paraphrased lines of that extraordinary and beautiful chapter of Ecclesiasticus.

Kipling has many stylistic mannerisms, and at certain times he is inclined to overstrain the use of the hyphen. Lexicographers have not given any hard and fast rules with regard to the correct use of this sign, but certainly many of Kipling's compounds are unnecessary transgressions, and he can have no excuse for such examples as "rapidly-filling," "perfectly-tempered," "carefully-watched," "shaved-head." Now and again we get long-drawn hyphen flashes. Kipling may have acquired this kind of colloquialism in the United States, where it has become an irritating habit with the journalist. Listen to the following mannerisms:

"You're-only-a-little-girl" sort of flirtation; "We took it easy that gun-practice. We did it in a complimentary 'Jenny-have-another-cup-of-tea' style"; "painty-winged, wand-waving, sugar-and-shake-your-head set of impostors." In "Just So Stories" Kipling perhaps reaches the very limit of linguistic recklessness and plays ducks and drakes with word-formation.

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But enough of this ! The object of this chapter was neither to indulge in a stylistic-philological study of the author's works nor in a list of his errors. It was to try and discover Kipling's wonderland of words. The instruction one derives from any single volume of Kipling is incalculable. One of Stevenson's heroes said of Whitaker that he acquired more information from the volume than he would be able to make use of in a lifetime. That is how I felt after reading "Kim."

Kipling's enthusiasm for the pageant of modern industrialism has always been clear to the reader. As a boy he was known to be more inquisitive about the tradesman or the mechanic than his schoolfellows. There are several passages in "Stalky and Co." which throw a sidelight on his predilection for professional terms. He loves to wallow in the technicalities of any trade or calling. To bear myself out, if the reader turns to "Stalky and Co." he will find that one of Kipling's schoolfellows chaffs him for being so "filthy technical," and upon another occasion, when Beetle (Kipling) is assisted by Stalky and McTurk in the setting up of the *Swillingford Patriot*, he is requested not to be "so beastly professional" in his directions to the "Staff." Certain of his works are starred with racy Americanisms. One might almost pick out the works which came from his pen during his long stay in his wife's native country. I think that period covered from August, 1892, to September, 1896. And the books which were written during this sojourn are characteristic of the American dialect ; you find it in "Captains Courageous," ".007," "A Walking Delegate," "Many Inventions," and most particularly in the "Jungle Books." "My speech is clean and single, I talk of common things," he has written in some verses on Canada : that is exactly what he has done, and he has done it in such a thoroughgoing way that the speech of common things threatens to become involved, especially when he goes to the



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Anglo-Indian, Cockney, Yorkshire, Irish, Scotch, Afri-cander, Sussex and American dialects for word-forage.

In an article in the *Pall Mall Magazine* which appeared in 1904, Mr. George Moore pays a good deal of attention to Kipling's prose works. With that acute and analytic intelligence which seems to be common to all Irish writers, he has endeavoured to tear from Kipling the secrets that most assuredly underlie the éclat of his literary progress. Mr. Moore remarks that in the eighties none knew what world Kipling was going to reveal. That world had now become a known quantity, and he does not think that such words as "noble" and "beautiful" could be applied to it. After groping among Kipling's writings he suggests such adjectives as "rough," "harsh," and "coarse-grained." He utterly refuses to be dazzled by those qualities of strength, coarseness, and of lavish eloquence, such as we have always associated with our most essentially democratic poet. Mr. Moore takes "Kim," and as he reads he finds more and more amiss with it. He says that at first the reader may be fascinated by "Kim" because he has been so well observed and so sedulously imitated :

The Lama we can see as if he were before us—an old man in his long habit and his rosary ; we hear his continuous mumbling ; but very soon we perceive that Kim and the Lama are fixed—we have not read thirty pages before we see that those two will be the same at the end of the book as they were in the beginning.

None the less this critic sees clearly that Kipling is a master of words, and grants him a facile command of language. But he is careful to note that it is only an expression of riotous strength and superabundant animal vigour, combined with a keen eye for all the coloured details of life. Mr. Moore points out that none since the Elizabethans have written with such command over the language :

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Others have written more beautifully, but no one that I can call to mind at this moment has written so copiously. Shelley and Wordsworth, Landor and Pater, wrote with part of the language ; but who else, except Whitman, has written with the whole language since the Elizabethans ? "The flannelled fool at the wicket, the muddled oaf at the goal," is wonderful language. He writes with the eye that appreciates all that the eye can see, but of the heart he knows nothing, for the heart cannot be observed ; his characters are therefore external, and they are stationary.

Now it appears to the reader of the above passage that Mr. Moore voices the opinion that Kipling's work is extremely consistent from first to last ; that the exceptional brilliancy of his impression painting with which he burst forth so suddenly upon a jaded literary world is preserved faithfully in his later volumes ; but, at the same time, he does not seem to have progressed in the deeper thoughts on human life. I think that many critics will be minded to dissent strongly from Mr. Moore when he says Kipling "knows nothing of the heart." There is certainly little ground to support this hypothesis, if some of the author's late stories be carefully studied ; that the peculiarly ingenious novelties of Mulvaney, Ortheris, and Learoyd should be misunderstood by Mr. Moore is, I suppose, quite natural ; but when he has nothing to say about the deep insight of "Without Benefit of Clergy," "Wee Willie Winkie," and "Little Tobrah," one is forced to protest. Again, take the story "They" ; here Kipling's almost faultless artistic instinct enters, and we find in it a wonderful perception of the heart of a child ; like the "Story of My Heart" by Jefferies, it is an autobiography of the soul. Later, Mr. Moore makes a comparison between a certain inner coldness and hardness he finds in much of Kipling's work with the manner of Pierre Loti :

One writer blows his pipe on the hill-side, the other blares like a military band ; all brass and reed instruments are included in this band. Mr. Kipling's prose goes to a marching rhythm, the trumpet's blare and the fife's shriek ; there is the bass clarionet and the great brass tuba that emits

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a sound like the earth quaking fathoms deep or the cook shovelling coal in the coal-cellar. The band is playing variations : but variations on what theme ? The theme will appear presently . . . Listen ! There is the theme, the shoddy tune of the average man—" I know a trick worth two of that."

In this phrase of Dick Heldar, " I know a trick worth two of that," Mr. Moore finds not only the condensed representation of "The Light that Failed," but the epitome and quintessence of Kipling's creed. The critic who searches may find, it is true, reflections of this phrase in Kipling ; but it is the "trick" that gives one the grip on life and a renewed determination to play the game through.

Kipling's style has often been likened to that of Pierre Loti. Still, it must be admitted that the work of the former is wider in its scope, and more varied in its characteristics than that of the French author. Kipling's tales of Indian life, for instance, exhibit a superabundance of genuine invention which is totally lacking in the stories of Pierre Loti. While Loti, as a young naval officer on foreign service, was content to write the love stories of yellow and tawny native Cyprians in a more natural and piquant manner than his predecessors had done, Kipling was making a determined protest against all such outworn literary conventions. In Loti's stories of his amorous adventures in Turkey, Tahiti, Senegal, and Japan, there is, to be sure, a freshness of style and a certain triteness of expression which one might connect with the creator of *Mulvaney*, but apart from that, the monotony of plot and sentiment is in striking contrast with Kipling's glorious field of imaginative power.

Kipling has always objected to the interviewer. But Dr. Kellner, author of the "History of English Literature in the Victorian Era," was permitted to visit him in 1898. He summed up his impressions of his visit to Rottingdean in the memorable phrase, "To-day I have

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seen happiness face to face." Authentic descriptions of the inner side of Rudyard Kipling and his home are so scarce that I venture to draw upon Dr. Kellner's interview.

The work-room is of surprising simplicity : the north wall is covered with books half its height, over the door hangs a portrait of Burne-Jones (Mr. Kipling's uncle), to the right near the window stands a plain table—not a writing-table—on which lie a couple of pages containing verses. No works of art, no conveniences, no knick-knacks, the unadorned room simple and earnest like a Puritan chapel.

Dr. Kellner remarks that the old Puritan strain in Kipling probably aided him to keep a cool head in his hour of triumph. "I am very distrustful against fame," said Kipling, "very distrustful against praise." It is a pity that this self-critical and distrustful attitude has not been strong in the minds of many other great men—Oscar Wilde, for example. "You know the fate of eighteenth-century English literature, how many 'immortal' poets that prolific time brought forth, and yet how much of this 'immortal' poetry still lives in our time? To name only one—who reads Pope nowadays? I often run over these volumes" (here he pointed to the "Edition de Luxe" of his own works) "and think to myself how much of that which is printed on such beautiful paper ought never to have seen the light. How much was written for mere love of gain, how often has the knee been bowed in the house of Rimmon?" (a favourite expression of Kipling's).

The conversation of Kipling reflects his spontaneity, buoyancy of success, love of outdoor life, and exuberant good health. He understands as few writers have ever done the secret of balance in his work—the balance of the serious with the humorous, the pathetic with the merry, of work with rest.

He knows that ideas do not always come when one sits down at his desk and cudgels one's brains, and most

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of the work that he turns out under pressure of this kind finds its way to the wastepaper basket, from which "Recessional" (as it has been printed) was rescued. So he puts himself in a receptive mood, and digs in the garden, and lo, the ideas surge through him :

*The cure for this ill is not to sit still,  
Or frowst with a book by the fire ;  
But to take a large hoe and a shovel also,  
And dig till you gently perspire—*

Rest is rust ; the mintage of wisdom is to know that real life lies in laughter and work.

Kipling is devoted to his garden, is fond of fishing, and I came across a report in an American paper that he could handle a plough and drive a straight furrow with the best of ploughmen.

He was an ardent admirer of Cecil Rhodes. He knew him personally, and has remarked that "Rhodes was greater than his work." Kipling is not in favour of the annexation of one white nation by another. "It is the greatest crime that a politician can commit. Don't annex white men," he remarked.

"What about black men ?" he was asked.

"I am against slavery," was the answer, "if only for the reason that the white man becomes demoralized by slavery."

The *Review of Reviews*, April, 1899, remarked that the "influence of Kipling on politics is something like that of Carlyle." Both are preachers of the doctrine of the drill sergeant ; one worshipped Frederick the Great, the other Sergeant What'sname, "who drilled a black man white and made a mummy fight." Certainly Kipling, like Carlyle, believes in work and the strenuous life as a cure-all. His verse pulses and throbs with the gospel of work, and he has written much which one might regard as Carlyle re-vitalized. Take the following paragraph from Carlyle :



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For there is a perennial nobleness, and even sacredness, in Work. Were he never so benighted, forgetful of his high calling, there is always hope in a man that actually and earnestly works. In idleness alone is there perpetual despair. Work, never so Mammonish, is in communication with Nature ; the real desire to get Work done with itself leads one more and more to truth, to Nature's appointments and regulations, which are truth.

These lines almost define the aspiration of Kipling's muse. Work has been saluted by him in the splendid verse which ends :

*Each for the joy of the working, and each in his separate star,  
Shall draw the Thing as he sees It, for the God of Things as They Are.*

"Kipling's God is the God of the Old Norse Sea Kings, the fighting God, the Lord of the Hosts of Cromwell, a terribly real and awful Deity, who, nevertheless, can sympathise with a first-rate fighting man, and will in the end see that justice is done," writes a critic in the *Review of Reviews*.

There are mingled elements in Kipling's blood, but there is more of the Puritan strain than anything else. Those who have known the man do not doubt it, and to my mind at least, his genius yields the strongest proof of it in "Recessional," in which he strikes with an unerring hand the lyre of the Hebrew bard. Man is unto himself a mystery : by ways strange and undreamed of, across the opposing currents of a lifetime, the soul of a race wins back to its own. Kipling remains Methodist in soul, spite of his years in India, spite of his immersion in the great sea of Imperialism, spite even of the profane language of the barrack-room. Oh yes, the pendulum always swings back and the immemorial claims of race and blood strive within him for reassertion :

*God of our fathers, known of old . . . be with us yet.*

The "Song of the English" is as direct, as simple and as forceful as "Recessional." Our duty is to hold the



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faith our fathers sealed and to keep the law of our Imperial mission. Kipling's modern saint gets into the game and plays it. The man who endeavours to keep himself "unspotted from the world" he looks upon as a rogue and a coward. The more we understand life, the better shall we comprehend death is the decision always arrived at by Kipling.

Critics have dubbed him the "Banjo-Bard" with contempt. But after reading "The Song of the Banjo," one begins to realize that this epithet loses all its intended sting. Here is a rare song, illuminated throughout by flashes of heroic life, sealed by the personality of the Anglo-Saxon, and all credit goes to the splendiferous adventurer who can hammer such haunting music out of the democratic banjo. How all the intolerable hindrances and disappointments of the pioneer flash to the mind in the line :

*I have told the naked stars the Grief of Man.*

In some respects the "Song of the Banjo" reminds the reader of the spasmodic conversations of Mr. Jingle in "Pickwick"—sudden spurts of thought and fancy and description, with a "gilly-willy-winky-popp" for breath pause, and then on again with the "war drum of the white man round the world."

Some of the less aspiring ballads have an excellent go about them. Let us take one example from "Puck of Pook's Hill," called "The Smuggler's Song"; this poem is worthy of Robert Louis Stevenson.

It is not easy to determine the value of such poems as "If—" and "The Thousandth Man." Whatever may be their faults—and they seem to contain many—as pure poetry, they are charged with a note of materialistic realism, and urge the high doctrine of loyalty, which appeals at once to the everyday sentiments of the average man. Had Kipling been more of an idealist he would

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have soared too high over the heads of the people ; but he knew that one cannot carry soldiers, sailors, colonizers, and codfishers with one in these towering flights with Pegasus.

In " If—" Kipling preaches a sermon on divine energy. Life is a bank account, with so much divine energy at your disposal. What are you going to do with it ? " If you can watch the things you gave your life to, broken, and stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools . . . yours is the Earth and everything that's in it, and—what is more—you'll be a Man, my son !

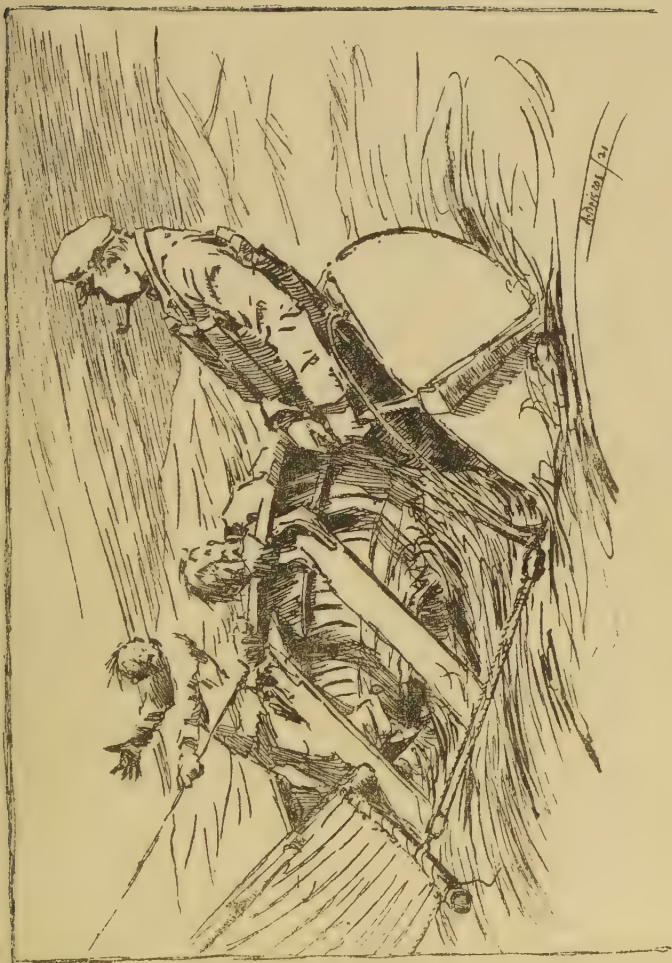
*If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew  
To serve your turn long after they are gone,  
And so hold on when there is nothing in you  
Except the Will which says to them : " Hold on ! "*

The question is, then, are you tintured with that dash of persistency that urges you to constantly put forth an effort to " Hold on ! " when all strength but cold will-power has deserted you ? If not, you are merely a camp-follower.

That section of Kipling's verse which deals with nature and outdoor life must be placed in a division by itself. Some of the poems in which he sings of the " go fever " reminds one of the exquisitely phrased pagan glorification of mere existence of Borrow's " Lavengro " :

Life is sweet, brother . . . There's night and day, brother, both sweet things : sun, moon, and stars, brother, all sweet things ; there's likewise the wind on the heath. Life is very sweet, brother ; who would wish to die ?

Mr. J. De Lancey Ferguson, of Columbia University, said that so far as the love of out-of-doors was made a subject of poetry by Kipling's predecessors, it was seldom more than a repeated desire to follow the baying hounds, or to sport with Amaryllis in the shade. He pointed out that none of the poets ever mentioned



"IF——" *From the standpoint of a Yachtsman.*

"If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs and blaming it on you."



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what he would do if it were cold or wet, or if the sea were really rough. But Kipling has changed all this, for he hunts on new trails. He has hymned the ship engineer and the locomotive driver. He has sung of the sailor's love of the sea, of the pleasure in the bucking, beam sea roll of a coffin screw-steamer with her loadline over her hatch, and a shifting cargo of rails. He has sung of the "ram-you-dam-you liner with a brace of bucking screws," of sealers fighting to the death in a fog, of the cattle-boat men who made a contract with God, and of the wholly unauthorized horde of "Gentlemen Rovers"—the legion of the lost ones, the cohort of the damned.

"The Anchor Song" is an ambitious attempt to force sea terms and words of command to accommodate themselves to the uses of verse. It will be noticed that the instructions given by a master of a sailing vessel in getting his ship off to sea are arranged in their exact order in this poem. It should be pointed out that some of the words of command which Kipling uses here are now rapidly passing out of use. It is interesting to note that "The Anchor Song" follows closely the instructions given in Dana's *Sailing Manual* for getting a boat away.

Many of Kipling's sea verses are written on the true chantey model. The refrain "A-hoy O! To me O!" in "Frankie's Trade" is to be found in many sailor songs. Some of these chanteys are based on fragments of topical song adapted by the musical seaman; some go back through the centuries till we find parallels to their tunes in the glorious sea days of the great Elizabeth. They often bear with them a rich legacy of nautical memories, and no doubt Kipling has realized that the indispensable kernel of the true sea song is to be found in these quaint chanteys.

I give the following remarkably mournful song, with a long dragging chorus, to show how closely Kipling has

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modelled some of his new ballads on the chantey. It is likely that this one has lifted the sail of many a clipper of the sixties :

SOLO. *Tommy's gone, what shall I do ?*  
 CHORUS. *Hurrah, Hilo.*  
 SOLO. *Tommy's gone, what shall I do ?*  
 CHORUS. *Tom's gone to Hilo.*  
 SOLO. *To Liverpool, that noted school,*  
*To Liverpool, that noted school,*  
*Tommy's gone to Quebec town,*  
*Tommy's gone to Quebec town,*  
*There's Pretty Sall and Jenny Brown,*  
*There's Pretty Sall and Jenny Brown,*  
*A-dancing on that stony ground,*  
*A-dancing on that stony ground,*  
*Tommy's gone to Baltimore,*  
*A-rolling on the sandy floor,*  
*Tommy's gone to Mobile Bay*  
*To roll down cotton all the day,*  
*He's gone away to Dixie's Land,*  
*Where there's roses red and violets blue.*  
*Up aloft that yard must go,*  
*I thought I heard the skipper say,*  
*That he would put her through to-day,*  
*Shake her up and let her go,*  
*Stretch her leeche and shew her clew,*  
*One pull more and that will do,*  
 CHORUS. *Hurrah, Hilo.*  
 SOLO. *One pull more and that will do,*  
 CHORUS. *Tom's gone to Hilo.*  
*Belay !*

"The Ballad of the Clampherdown" was one of the poems that first exhibited Kipling just as much a poet of the sailor as the soldier. Perhaps the technical terms are rather bewildering, and a brief explanation of some of them may be of interest to the reader :

*Stays.* Wire ropes which uphold the masts and funnels of the battleship.  
*"Make it so."* The expression of assent used by a naval officer to a subordinate.

*Ram.* The Ram is a part of the machinery of the gun. It is used for



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ramming the projectile and charge home. When Kipling published this poem the ram was worked by steam, and it is quite possible that the turret would be filled with steam if this part of the gear should get out of order. The ram is now hydraulic.

*Hotchkiss.* Quick-firing machine gun.

*Nordenfelt.* Quick-firing machine gun.

*Runners.* These are steel rails on which the gun is moved.

*Thresher.* The fox-shark that often attacks the whale.

"*Lie down.*" The A.B. is told to lie down on account of the terrific shock that may occur by the force of contact when the ships collide.

*The Waist.* The centre part of a ship.

We find another aspect of the poet's verse in "Christmas in India." Besides the songs of the "Go-fever" and "Wanderlust," he has given us the song of homesickness, and it is a wonderful expression of those war-weary exiles who wait in "heavy harness on fluttered folk and wild." Say what you will of the roughness and selfishness of men, at the last they long for companionship and the fellowship of our kind. We are like lost children, and when alone and the darkness gathers, we long for the close relationship of those brothers and sisters we left behind us in our childhood and long for the magic touch of those gentle arms that once rocked us to sleep. These are the thoughts of the exile which burn like irons.

"The Gipsy Trail," an uncollected poem which appeared in the *Century* of December, 1892, partakes of the nature of the "open-air" or George Borrow chant. It is a distinct departure from his habitual style :

*Out of the dark of the Gorgio camp,  
Out of the grime and the grey,  
(Morning waits at the end of the world),  
Gipsy, come away !*

"The White Man's Burden," like many other phrases from Kipling's pen, is already one of the stock references of writers and speakers. Plays, short stories, pictures and novels have been written with it as a text. It is this

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power of coining striking phrases that causes even his doggerel to pass thoroughly into everyday life. Poetry does not always require wisdom of the intellect and scholarliness to be great. Burns, Blake, Keats, Poe, Whitman show how a lack of scholarship is often compensated by an intuitive wisdom of heart and emotion. "The White Man's Burden" is a song of Imperialism which is not to be confused with the flaunty Jingoism of the music-halls. Kipling has put the Imperialist doctrine on the right basis, and in this poem he passionately and seriously formulates the only true moral basis of Empire. It was this poem which more than any other did so much to hearten the Americans to attempt the preliminary conquest of a silent, sullen people, "half devil and half child." The toil, fatigue, and bloodshed which were the preliminaries of taking up the white man's burden in the Philippines, almost disheartened the people of the United States. But they had to learn that such sacrifices are imposed upon all who would tread the path of Empire. Whatever may be said concerning the methods of the States in shouldering these burdens, we as a nation have played our part. Our share of those silent, sullen people amounts to four hundred millions, while the other white nations of the world wage "the savage wars of peace" with only a hundred millions. Thus it will be seen that each white man under British rule is responsible for seven black or copper-coloured men.

The old Puritan spirit breathes in every line of "The White Man's Burden." As the Infinite Drill-Sergeant who is above all Princes and Kings is the guide of the White Man, so must the White Man be the Providence of the Black People. Needless to say these verses have provoked many parodies and replies, in which the poetasters never fail to inform the public how we have robbed the "sullen people." One, which was published in *Concord* and from the pen of Mr. George Lynch, is certainly not lacking in fervour :

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*Bear we the Black Man's burden !  
The stealing of our lands,  
Driven backwards, always backwards,  
E'en from our desert sands ;  
You bring us your own poison,  
Fire liquor that you sell,  
While your Missions and your Bibles  
Threaten your White Man's hell.*

Still more emphatic is the fourth stanza, which ends with the couplet :

*You cheat us for your profit,  
You damn us for your gain.*

A certain section of the people have been inclined to sneer at Kipling as the poet of the music-hall. One might as well declare that Mozart was a composer for the barrel-organ. But true genius cannot be vulgarized.

"Our Viceroy Resigns" \* in "Departmental Ditties," seems to have been written under the immediate and assistent influence of Browning. Kipling employs the Browning metres, the Browning involutions, and the Browning abruptness. This poem contains a clever cameo portrait of Lord Roberts which is said to have vexed the great soldier.

I think it must be granted that the "Barrack Room Ballads" are an honest and singularly successful attempt to explain Tommy Atkins, as Kipling tells us, both "for

\* Lord Lansdowne took the place of Lord Dufferin as Viceroy of India in 1888. Lady Dufferin, in "Our Viceregal Life in India," says that on the Sunday after the arrival of the new Viceroy "D. shut himself up with Lord Lansdowne and talked to him four hours without stopping." Lord Dufferin was made Ambassador at Rome after he returned from India ; hence the line "I go back to Rome and leisure." It was his boast that during his tenure of office he had annexed a "country twice the size of France" (Burma) and thus checked the encroachment of the Russians. A grim lay reader with a taste for coins, and faith in sin most men withhold from God," of course, refers to Sir T. C. Hope. It is interesting now to observe how accurately Kipling foresaw that the then Sir Frederick Roberts would win his way to the Lords by way of "Frontier Roads."

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our pleasure and our pain." Critics from time to time have attacked Kipling very bitterly for his descriptions of the Tommy; they have quibbled and wrangled over the Kiplingesque coarseness of the slang and held up their hands in shocked amazement because the poet dares to give some barrack-room reflections about women. It is true that the soldier, who like Jack has a girl in every port, is not strong on monogamy. In "The Ladies," he says, "I've 'ad my picking o' sweet'earts and four o' the lot was prime," and the epitome of the poem is given in the line, "the more you have known the others, the less will you settle to one."

In "Mary, Pity Women!" Kipling has attempted to show something of the misery and burning shame felt by the soldier's abandoned mistress. But it is to be regretted that Kipling should hint that it is quite in order that the women should suffer and the men go free. Lord Kitchener's parting message to the Expeditionary Force struck the right corrective note in this respect. Even the pity for the unfortunate is grudged, and Kipling seems to try and cover up the tracks of the transgressor with world-weary cynicism: "What's the good," "What's the use," &c.

*What's the good o' pleadin' when the mother that bore you,  
(Mary, pity women !) knew it all before you.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*What's the good o' prayin' for The Wrath to strike 'im  
(Mary, pity women !) when the rest are like 'im.*

There you have in Kipling's own words Kipling's own idea of men. We sincerely hope that the "rest" are not at all like the ruffian in "Mary, Pity Women!" Let us stamp out such barbarous conceptions. "Stamp it out!" Justice cries it. Art echoes it. The qualities of a mother are the heritage of her sons. To have a strong and truthful race of men who are afraid of no

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man, and of whom no woman need be afraid, we must evolve a race of mothers who are not burdened by those who "shove" all they solemnly promise behind them. The good pride and sporting spirit of the true Tommy, it is certain, will urge him to make it a point of honour to reject any idea that the weaker vessel must be always thrust to the wall. As to Tommy's language. It is rather free, often very profane, and I am certain quite a meaningless practice in the barrack-room. But swearing is, as the good Bishop Lightfoot once remarked, with some men a mere matter from the lips outward.

Kipling hides nothing, glosses nothing. He sounds a deep note of the horror of war in the ballad addressed to the young British soldier. When you are wounded and left to die on the open plains of Afghanistan, and women prowl about to "cut up" what remains :

*Jest roll to your rifle and blow out your brains,  
An' go to your Gawd like a soldier,  
So-oldier of the Queen !*

In one of the worst of Kipling's poems, that entitled "Kitchener's School" we learn that "Allah created the English mad—the maddest of all mad things," but all the same the "English obey the Judge and say that the law is good." That is Kipling all over, especially in regard to keeping the law. "The head and the hoof and the haunch and the hump of the law is—Obey !" This is the note of the drill-sergeant which breathes in every line of his verse and prose. Sergeant What'sname who drilled a black man white, and taught a mummy how to handle a rifle, is ever the right-hand man in Kipling's temple of fame.

In "Soldiers Three" he has done his best to revive the dying faith in blind barrack-room submission to authority, and we at once feel that these soldiers are merely "puppet-like puppets." They are merely three of the most perfect products of a sound drill book



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training. They can hardly be described as elaborate portraits because they all come from the same mould. It is true that Kipling has expressed in his early poetry and prose a human type, a type that is known wherever the British soldier is known. But the soldier of to-day has left our friends of "Barrack-Room Ballads" far back in the distance. The men in the trenches of France were more thoughtful than the rough-and-ready, domineering, but far from ignoble type Kipling found in India at the end of the last century. This sturdy but awkward warrior furnished Kipling with an ideal, and he produced from it the utmost emotional value which a commonplace ideal can give.

But Mulvaney, Ortheris, and Learoyd have all had their day, and the almost ever-present coarseness which the author mistook for vigour needed a check. All great writers have a natural delight in coarseness, but in "Soldiers Three" Kipling gave us just a little too much of it. I cannot find a single private soldier in Kipling's writings who is not illiterate. This is a mistake. There were to be sure thousands of Tommies in 1885 who mishandled their Queen's English, but there were many who could write well and think well too. Thomas Hardy, David Christie Murray, Archibald Forbes were all common or garden Tommies in their time. So "Soldiers Three" only gives us a certain type of soldier, doubtless a faithful portrait of that type, but Kipling has not attempted an accurate description of the various men in the average regiment.

Kipling's Deity is the terrible and real "Jehovah of the Thunders," who can sympathize with men who can put up a good fight, or sing a roistering barrack song. There is perhaps a suggestion of arrogance in his writings; an idea that we are the Lord's chosen people and that He has "smote for us a pathway to the ends of all the Earth." Observe the veiled arrogance in certain lines of "Recessional," in which he hints that our battleline



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is no small affair but a "far-flung" array, which is qualified to control the destiny of half the universe. Mark, too, his naïve admiration for the greatness of Empire in one of his happiest lines in which he speaks of "Dominion over palm and pine." The last three words carry the reader's mind in instantaneous sweep across our territories from Canada to Ceylon.

In an editorial note, under the title of "The Truth about 'The Recessional,'" *Literature* (April 13, 1901) gave the following interesting facts about Kipling's famous verses :

So many accounts of the way in which "Recessional" reached *The Times* have been published on "the very best authority" that it may be as well to dispose of them by the publication of the following letter which enclosed the MS. :

DEAR ———

Enclosed please find my sentiments on things—which I hope are yours. We've been blowing up the Trumpets of the New Moon a little too much for White Men, and it's about time we sobered down.

If you would like it, it's at your service—on the old conditions that I can use it if I want it later in book form. The sooner it's in print the better. I don't want any proof. Couldn't you run it to-night so as to end the week piously ?

If it's not your line, please drop me a wire.

Ever yours sincerely,

R. K.

The poem was published the next morning. Mr. Kipling was asked to name his own price, but absolutely declined all payment.

Now and again Kipling sounds a whimsical note. He has unfolded in a most startling fashion the wondering amazement of the Hindoo brought face to face with the Western religion and "The Man of Sorrows" :

. . . *What Gods are these*  
*You bid me please ?*  
*The Three in One, the One in Three ? Not so !*  
*To my own gods I go.*  
*It may be they shall give me greater ease*  
*Than your cold Christ and tangled Trinities.*

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"Pagett, M.P.," in "Departmental Ditties" is one of the most successful Anglo-Indian poems. It has been mentioned in a quarter that should be well informed, that the late Mr. W. S. Caine, M.D., was the original of Kipling's character. Mr. Caine was, however, only one of a number of M.P.'s who "did" India and wrote books about their travels, and certainly his book on India was far from being the worst of its kind. The thing that seems to annoy the Anglo-Indian, is that a man who is merely a tourist should dare to pose as an authority on subjects any one of which might well occupy a lifetime and leave the learner diffident at the end. The behaviour of the native-born American, who spends a few weeks in England with a guide-book, and then goes home to write a book on London life, is excusable beside that of the "travelled idiots" who profess to have mastered in a four months' visit all the religious and political problems presented by India.

Anglo-Indians have ever been known to inveigh against Kipling for immaturity of judgment: the *Englishman* of Calcutta attacked the story "An Unqualified Pilot" \* when it appeared, remarking that the author had very evidently primed himself by reading the article on the Hugli in *Hunter's Gazetteer*.

"The Fires" was printed by way of a preface to Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton's collected edition of Kipling's poems. In those verses the author had only to recall his own joyful adventure in becoming lawfully seized and possessed of hearth and roof-tree in that secluded nook of England by Burwash:

*How can I answer which is best  
Of all the fires that burn?  
I have been too often host or guest  
At every fire in turn.*

\* This story has not been included in any English edition of the author's works. It was printed in the *Windsor Magazine*, February, 1895.

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*How can I turn from any fire  
On any man's hearthstone?  
I know the wonder and desire  
That went to build my own.*

One passes from the rage and Western energy of "If—" to the dreamy endurance of the East—the East with its fatalistic doctrine that "what has to be will be"—and reads "From the Masjid-al-Aqsa of Sayyid Ahmed (Wahabi)" which is contained in "Traffics and Discoveries":

*Saluting aloofly his Fate, he made swift with his story;  
And the words of his mouth were as slaves spreading carpets of glory  
Embroidered with names of the Djinns—a miraculous weaving—  
But the cool and perspicuous eye overbore unbelieving.*

An examination of Kipling's wonderful power with the short lyric—which sometimes is magical—will show the reader that he has few equals and no superior. One of the finest he ever wrote, "Cities and Thrones and Powers," is to be found in "Puck of Pooks Hill":

*This season's Daffodil,  
She never hears,  
What change, what chance, what chill,  
Cut down last year's:  
But with bold countenance  
And knowledge small,  
Esteems her seven days' continuance  
To be perpetual.*

This is the great style, simple and direct. No unnecessary touch mars the theme; there is not a word too much. In an age desperately searching for new forms of expression in poetry, as in art, in an age aiming more at eccentricity than at excellence, we are inclined to favour only those who can sound the "new notes." But there is still room for a lyric of this kind—a fine simple thing written in a fine simple way. It is hardly necessary to

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do more than mention Herrick's "To Daffodils" as a possible source of inspiration in the writing of "Cities and Thrones and Powers"; but of course that is mere speculation. "Eddi's Service" is another short gem of narrative poetry, and "Sir Richard's Song," with its irresistible cry of "But now England have taken me!" is a poem of wonderful appeal.

Kipling has few equals as "the exultant singer of the sea and the sea-wind, the high-hearted lyrist of the great deeds and Imperial destiny of England." Even a man from Bedfordshire, as Stevenson has observed, who scarcely knows one end from the other of the channel steamer till she begins to move, and is as sea-sick as Nelson, feels a proprietary interest in the sea, and no poet has expressed it in larger language than Kipling. If one had time, it would be a delightful task to go through Kipling's writings and make a little anthology of his sea-music. It would have on the prefatory page those vivid stanzas on "Poseidon's Law" telling how the brass-bound man must never act or tell a falsehood to the pulse and tide of the sea. It would give us that glorious song "The Wet Litany," with all the thrills and perils of the deep unseen sea as it swells and swings in the fog. It would give us "The English Flag," the song of the Red and White Ensigns of England's sea power. As long as we love the sea, such an anthology should be dear to us as the music of the waves and wind.

At another time Kipling takes up his pen to sing the "Glory of the Garden," and shows that the spirit of the gardener is, or should be, akin to the note droned and chanted by McAndrew's engines: LAW, ORDER, DUTY AND RESTRAINT, OBEDIENCE, DISCIPLINE.

*Then seek your job with thankfulness and work till further orders ;  
If it's only netting strawberries or killing slugs on borders ;  
And when your back stops aching and your hands begin to harden,  
You will find yourself a partner in the Glory of the Garden.*





TO THE DOG SHOW

5. the carnals

2. to Aunt Sally

3. the fish ponds

4. the new gym steen

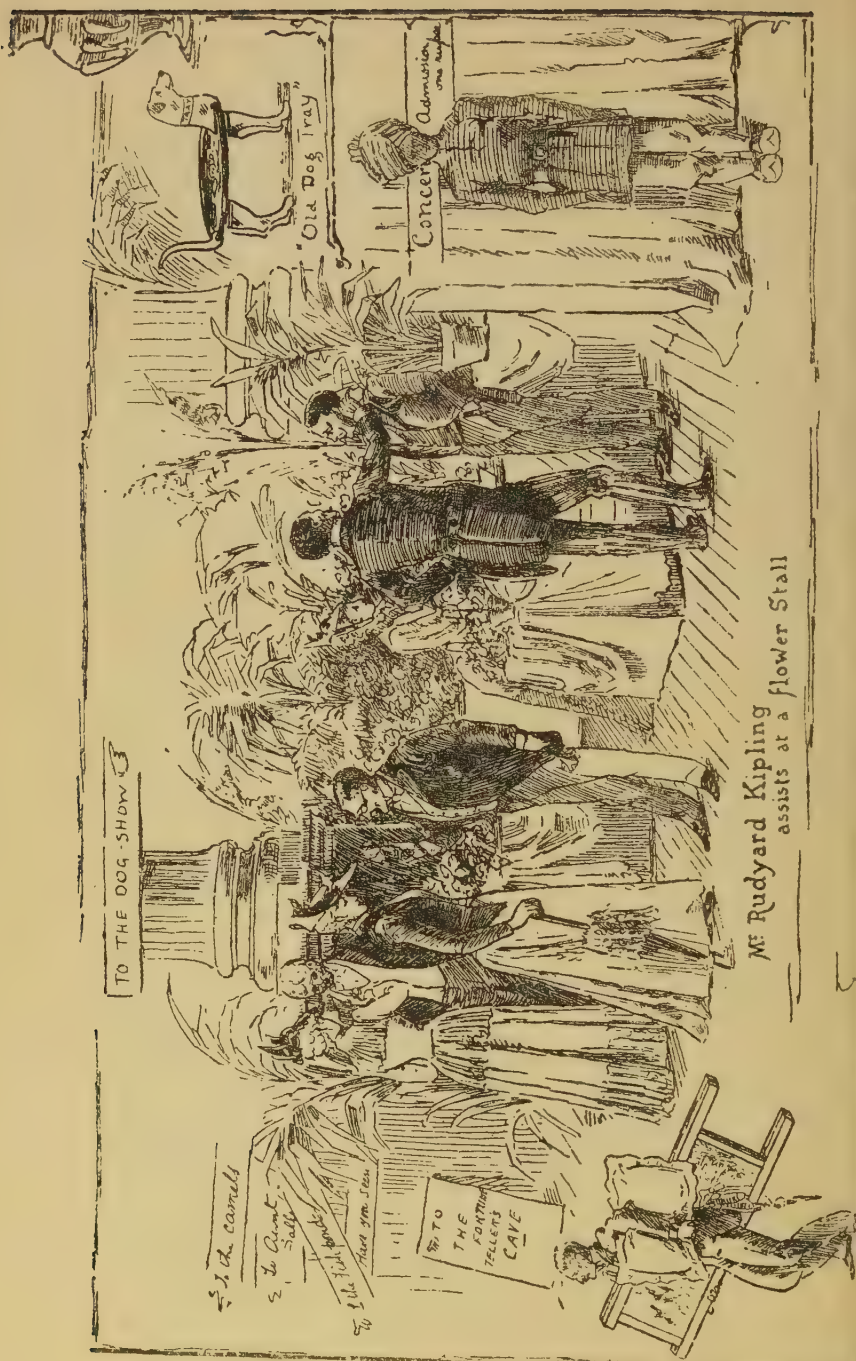
TO THE FORTUNE TELLER'S CAVE

"Old Dog Tray"

Conceal

Admission one nickel

Mr Rudyard Kipling  
assists at a flower stall





## POETRY

*Oh, Adam was a gardener, and God who made him sees  
That half a proper gardener's work is done upon his knees,  
So when your work is finished, you can wash your hands and pray  
For the Glory of the Garden that it may not pass away ;  
And the Glory of the Garden it shall never pass away ! ”*

The pen-and-ink drawing of Rudyard Kipling assisting at a Bazaar flower stall, here reproduced, is unique. After nearly thirty years this piece of literary flotsam was cast up in a London sale room. It was sketched by F. H. A. for a proposed programme for Lady Lyall's Bazaar and Fancy Fair in aid of the building of the Albert Victor Wing of the Mayo Hospital, Lahore, December 18 and 19, 1891. The figures depicted are undoubtedly well-known Anglo-Indians, and any reader who was in touch with Anglo-Indian officials, who were stationed in the Punjab, preferably at the Simla Headquarters in 1891, could give a good deal of information regarding them, especially if he saw the original sketch, of which the reproduction only gives the central panel. In the upper panel is depicted "Mrs. Rattigan's Stall"—Mrs. Rattigan in 1891 was just married to Mr. H. A. B. Rattigan, who was at that time an Advocate of the Chief Court, Punjab. In the third and last panel, Lady Lyall, the wife of Sir James Lyall, Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab (1887-1892), is depicted as serving refreshments at her stall. Finally one Tommy Dods, who cannot be traced, also figures in the same panel. This sketch, with a remarkable and comprehensive collection of Kipling's books and Kiplingiana, was offered at auction by Messrs. Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge on April 4, 1921.

Captain E. W. Martindell, who was the owner of the above collection, obtained from the same source as the Bazaar drawing an album of Indian photographs—most probably taken by Kipling himself—numbering twenty-eight in all, each with the title underneath in Kipling's handwriting, and four unpublished verses on the flyleaf

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entitled "A Ballad of Photographs," in R. K.'s writing. The album was presented by the author to a charity bazaar in Simla. The verses are charming and most realistic word-pictures of the Indian views, which are displayed in "pomp of full-plate cabinet," and takes the reader from Benares Ghat to Mussorie Woods; to the dead homes of kings—the East of the ancient navigators, so old and mysterious, so resplendent and sombre, living and immutable, full of peril and promise. But, alas! These early verses by Rudyard Kipling may be doomed never to see the light of day, as Mr. Kipling's literary agent refuses to allow them to be reproduced. And it is not unexpected that Kipling, who lives by the word alone—"the word picked and polished," should object to the impressions of youth, and the random tag-rag of his work in old albums being dragged before the searchlight of criticism.

Captain Martindell's presentation copy of "Echoes," with the manuscript verses on the flyleaf, is also unique. The verses are headed, "Evelyn, from R. K., Sept. 1884." Kipling was only eighteen when he wrote these verses, and I am told that they sound an absolutely different note from any of his other verse. This poem, I fear, must also remain unpublished. In an interesting letter on his collection of Kipling manuscripts, proofs and letters, Captain Martindell writes as follows:

You might like to know that the poem "Cleared" was first written as deing in phonetic Irish; but the author, when he corrected the proof, deleted the phonetic Irish spelling throughout, e.g., "patroit" to "patriot"; "av coorse" to "of course," etc. The original MS. of "Tomlinson" is most interesting, and varies very considerably from the version that appeared in "Barrack Room Ballads." At one point the words "RANK BAD" have been written in the margin, and above W. E. Henley attempted with characteristic courage rather than success to improve on two of the lines. On the same folio against the line commencing "Winnow him out" is Kipling's comment: "If you cut this out I'll kill you." Later on four lines are deleted, and the author wrote four others in substitution, while the last six lines have been entirely

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mitted and do not appear in the poem as printed. My Kipling letters are most interesting. One says : " As to the ' Ballads of East and West,' the Abzai are a tribe on the Indian frontier. The Bonairs are another tribe. They were mentioned to show the scope of Kamel's raids. Fort Bukloh and The Tongue of Jagai do not exist in space. There is a fort Minto, but it is not near the hunting grounds of Kamel. Kipling's contributions to the *United Service College Chronicle*, after he left Westward Ho ! were signed under various names, e.g., " The Song of the Gates," in No. 16, October 15, 1883, was signed " Gigs " ; " On Foot Duty," in No. 18, March 28, 1884, was signed " Z. 54 R. A. " ; " The Ride of the Schools," in No. 21, October 30, 1884, was signed " N. W. P. "



## CHAPTER XII

### “STALKY AND CO.”

“Stalky and Co.” : The literature of school life : Books which influenced Kipling as a boy : Kipling’s old master, Cornell Price :





## CHAPTER XII

### “STALKY AND CO.”

THE Maiden Aunt who is in search of a nice book for a little boy with a shining face, a boy with irreproachable manners and tidy ways, had better not put “Stalky and Co.” on her list. For the adventures of the Schoolboys Three are not such as give joy to the timid guardians of youth, while the heroes themselves are young rascallions of the deepest dye. It is true that Stalky, McTurk, and Beetle have made a casual acquaintance with some of the great masters of English literature, but a slight knowledge of “Fors Clavigera” and “Men and Women” seems only to have served as an affected gloss to the combined characteristics of the terrible trio whose deep-revolving councils swayed all, from the head master to the study-fag, at those “twelve black houses by the shore.”

There were many who objected to the book, and pointed out that young Goths who smoke, swear, shoot cats, chivy the fags, and jape with the house masters were not worthy to grace the literature of school life. The book makes no claim to be a minute study of all the various classes of young male animals which are to be met with in our public schools. It is simply a short series of episodes, all of which were crowded into the last two years of Kipling's schooldays at that tough seminary of practical Imperialism—a cross between a public school and a convict settlement, from which nothing soft emerged. Some finicky persons would, indeed, hold “Stalky and Co.” to be a “gross and

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absolute travesty of facts," but the truth is these boys are quite true to life, and I have been told that some of the amazing practical jokes which Uncle Stalky and his retainers carried out were too wicked for type, and were for this reason kept out of the book. The college, indeed, seems to have been organized for the purpose of giving Stalky and Co. the utmost room and merge for their pranks. There is no limit to their impudence, just as there seems to be no boundary to their slang. The order and good government of the college they reduce to chaos, to the masters they bring headache and heartbreak.

It is natural for us to look back on the school stories of the past with a certain tenderness and regretful admiration. A golden haze envelops those departed books of our youth, and even through the sickly sentiment of "Eric," upon which Kipling has bestowed much ridicule, many happy reminiscences of childhood brightly gleam. Nevertheless, after reading "Tom Brown's Schooldays," "The Human Boy," "The Hill," and all the other literature of school life, we are bound to confess that there was room for "Stalky and Co." It must be evident at once that some, at least, of the success of the "Stalky" group of studies is due to Kipling's brilliancy of insight into the barbaric and abnormal state of mind. It is the uncivilized type of boy, so to speak, that he handles best. The boys at Westward Ho were "quite exceptional boys," was the verdict of one critic. It may be noted, too, that the school was entirely different to all other institutions of that kind on account of the apparent lack of discipline. In any other school the power of Kipling's trio would have been swiftly and painfully crushed.

For the first time in the history of the school story has a writer ventured to make his hero sneer at cricket and football, and yet we all know that fifty per cent. of any school hold the same views on the national sport as McTurk. My own experience at a county grammar

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school and a public school prompts me to make this statement. Kipling knows this, and he knows, too, why many boys profess an enthusiasm for cricket which is far from their hearts. McTurk's explanation of their unpopularity with some of the masters throws much light on one side of the question: "If we attended the matches and yelled 'well hit, sir,' an' stood on one leg an' grinned every time Heffy said, 'So ho, my sons, is it thus?' and said, 'Yes, sir,' and 'No, sir,' an' 'O, sir,' an' 'Please, sir,' like a lot of filthy fa-ags, Heffy 'ud think no end of us."

Whilst controlling the college paper it was the Beetle's good fortune to become more intimate with the head master than other boys; he was allowed the run of the worthy principal's library, which was stocked with noteworthy books: there Beetle found a fat armchair, a silver inkstand, and unlimited pens and paper. There were scores and scores of ancient dramatists; there were Hakluyt, his voyages: French translations of Muscovite authors called Pushkin and Lermontoff; little tales of a heady and bewildering nature, interspersed with unusual songs—Peacock was that writer's name; there was Borrow's "Lavengro"; an odd theme, purporting to be a translation of something, called a "Rubaiyat," which the head said was a poem not yet come to its own; there were hundreds of volumes of verse—Crashaw; Dryden; Alexander Smith; L.E.L.; Lydia Sigourney; Fletcher's "Purple Island"; Donne; Marlowe's "Faust"; and—this made McTurk (to whom Beetle conveyed it) sheer drunk for three days—Ossian; "The Earthly Paradise"; "Atalanta in Calydon"; and Rossetti—to name only a few.

The interest and encouragement which the head took in the College Chronicle and its youthful editor must have greatly influenced Kipling as a boy, and the dedication of "Stalky and Co." to him is one of the finest poems we have from Kipling's pen. "The Head," who tried

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to teach his unruly crowd of boys common sense ("Truth and God's own common sense"), which Kipling believed was more than knowledge, could not have been but gratified with this tribute, coming as it did after many days.

It may be freely granted that if ever there lived three boys who were the embodiment of the resourceful and cheerful Anglo-Saxon spirit, they are to be met arm-in-arm in "Stalky and Co." Stalky became in due course a colonel of Sikhs, McTurk entered the Indian Telegraph Service, and the sportive Beetle, with his gig-lamps, sailed out to India and fame.

"The Head," who for twenty years had been busy laying broad the foundations of a truly Imperial education, had kindness and wise insight enough to know that a boy may be in every mischievous scrape that takes place in the school, and yet remain pure and wholesome, and withal lovable. Anybody who can discern between the lines of "Stalky and Co." is well aware that the real hero of the book is "The Head" himself. Readers will bear in mind that Kipling's old master, Cornell Price, died in 1910, at the age of seventy-four.

## CHAPTER XIII

# KIPLING'S CULTURED DELIGHT IN ODOUR

Kipling and the sense of smell : Kipling's passion for dogs :  
"Garm—A Hostage."





## CHAPTER XIII

### KIPLING'S CULTURED DELIGHT IN ODOUR

MUCH has been made of Rudyard Kipling's faculty of observation. It is said that his success is due to his enormous initiative, and to the fact that he visualizes more vividly than almost any other writer. He sees in a flash. As you read his poems you can see, you can hear the characters moving about. Take those stirring verses in "The Song of the Banjo." One is not apt to attribute the sense of poetic impression to this much-maligned musical instrument. One is rather apt to link it with that merry old soul, Uncle Bones, and the south-east coast, but Kipling uses its tumpa—tumpa—tumpa—tumpy—tump to call up pictures in the haze of the imagination with extraordinary effect. One verse comes back to me—its atmosphere at any rate, and the lines about the "silence of the camp before the fight." This verse made the mental strain that men suffer when amidst lurking dangers more real to me than any other poem I have read. One can almost hear the plaintive twang of the banjo explaining that "ten to one was always fair" to men who fully understand that unless the "Patently Impossible" happens, the dawn will find them cold and dead.

One thing that strikes me in reading Kipling is his astonishingly keen sense of smell. I have read nearly every study and book dealing with Kipling which has been written in the English tongue, and I have noticed that they one and all pass over this most important fact.

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I think that this keen olfactory sense in the author must certainly be considered in estimating his powers in the art of story-telling. I am perfectly aware that it is against all the canons and laws of the literary profession to launch upon a discussion about the human nose in its relation to the art of writing. The reason why this subject is taboo while so many other less savoury subjects are permitted is rather difficult to determine. I once read that some sainted anchorite declared the use of the nose to be dangerous to the soul, and from thenceforward it was looked upon as a moral depravity to use this organ with any freedom. Most people, however, have ceased to look upon smelling as a sin, but from the scullery to the drawing-room it is looked upon as a decidedly indelicate subject. But since Kipling has shown such a lively and wholesome curiosity about smells I am minded to cast convention to the winds and probe into the matter.

It seems to me that much of the beauty and gripping power of Kipling's verse and prose is missed by ordinary people like ourselves, who just sit and read books without ever first having *lived* books. This statement deserves and needs a little fuller explanation. In the first place it is as well to point out that Kipling's readers are not confined to the mere literary world; they are not confined to the mere novel-reading public, in fact his books travel to parts where the literary man and the novel-reader very seldom penetrate. You will find his books in Canadian railway bunk-houses, barrack-room lockers, tramp steamers, and mixed with the cooking pots and pails of the miner and pioneer. What is it in Kipling's work which appeals to such a wide and varied public? By what magic does Kipling bewitch the literary man with fastidious senses, the uncritical novel-reader, or the illiterate soldier with ease? It is difficult to answer such questions, but beyond a doubt Kipling has made use of certain "tricks" to capture all classes

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of readers. He has moved the emotions and imagination of some people with rhythm ; others he has enticed with certain qualities of strength and coarseness, as displayed in the ugly story "The Mark of the Beast" ; he catches the ear of the soldier with his ribaldry and humour. For those who are not attracted by his humour or his horror, he paints wonderful word pictures of India and its native life. Those wonderful chapters in "Kim" are only so many gorgeous pictures, cunningly constructed to attract the eyes of the reader. Kipling is determined to let no class of reader escape his attention—he fishes with a net of the finest mesh. If neither touch nor hearing nor sight moves his reader he fills his nostrils with odours to stir up old memories. In "Kim" you can smell—how gloriously does he talk of smells—those smells that mean everything to the questing man ! Above all other smells Kipling ranks the smells of the camp fire, and of melting fat, which call up (how vividly !) the cooking of the evening meal and the steaming billy. With a puff of dung-fed camp-smoke and a whiff of burnt cordite, he can transport the soldier, in a second, from Aldershot to the sixteen-year-old battlefields of South Africa. These flashes of memory aided by smell are wonderful. Through smell we achieve a sense of the past ; the secret members of the mind are roused to life and memory.

In South Africa the scent of the wattle awakes in the New South Wales trooper memories of his native land. "Smells are surer than sights or sounds . . . they whisper old man come back," he sings. In this poem, "Lichtenberg" ("The Five Nations"), Kipling has gone out of the way to appeal to the olfactory sense of the reader. Again, does not the time-expired soldier in "Mandalay" recall all the burnished East by those "spicy garlic smells" of Burma ? Other odours mentioned by Kipling are the smell of camel—pure camel, one whiff of which is all Arabia ; "the smell of rotten

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eggs at Hitt, on the Euphrates, where Noah got the pitch for the Ark"; the flavour of drying fish in Burma, and "the smell of the Barracks" which every soldier knows. Of course there are other smells less material in their appeal, which almost come within the range of this short note. One is the first chill smell of the mountains, especially when one reaches the heights towards sunset or in the night. To gain knowledge of this experience the reader must turn to the wanderings of Kim and the Lama in the huddled mountains of the Sewalik range. Another is the odour of the forest or the jungle, which is to be gained from the "Jungle Books." It has been said that "of all the smells in the world, the smell of many trees is the sweetest and the most fortifying." It calls up in mankind dim unconscious memories of primeval life, when men were not pillowed and propped out of all possibility of leading a free and open life.

The smells of travel are indeed innumerable. I have quoted in another chapter of this volume an article from the *Times* which gives some unique odours, which, once encountered, linger in the voyager's nostrils for evermore.

Read through "Kim" again, and you will find that Kipling knows the odours of India as a man knows the woman he loves. The chapter in which Kim and the Lama fall in with the shuffling procession on the Grand Trunk is a perfect study in the super-refinement of the five senses, particularly vision and smell. Kipling's feeling for the East is filled out and made richer by his cultured delight in odour. His æsthetic appreciation of landscape, colour and odour are so subtly and intimately blended that the picture he gives you of a place is quite remarkably vivid and concrete. What, for instance, could be more striking than this passage from "Kim": "Then the night fell, changing the touch of the air, drawing a low, even haze, like a gossamer veil of blue, across the face of the country, and bringing out, keen and distinct, the smell of the wood-smoke and cattle, and the



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good scent of wheaten cakes cooked on ashes." The reader will note, too, that Mr. Lurgan's shop had the smell of "all the temples of all the East" and that a "whiff of musk, a puff of sandalwood, and a breath of sickly jessamine-oil" caught Kim's opened nostrils and made him forget that he was a Sahib. Kipling has also noted that the smell of the "yellow Chinese paper" on which the Lama traced the Great Wheel with all "the heavens, hells, and chances of human life" was like nothing else in the world. But the greatest smells of all are the "delicious earth smells" which are best after rain. "Mother Earth," says Kipling, "holds the seed of all life."

I remember now (as one remembers little things at such times) that, when I first read Rudyard Kipling's articles on his visit to the French lines\* in the *Daily Telegraph*, there came to me the odour of long-forgotten camp smells, and the memory of comrades' voices that startled over the long lapse of years. For keen and intimate understanding of those odours through which men achieve flashes of the past, where shall we look for Kipling's equal? What highways and byways of memory has he not opened up for us with a few happy strokes! He pitches his tent, lights his camp fire (you can smell it burning), and invites the reader to smoke a pipe with him over the cheerful blaze. The passage in "France at War" which displays how subtly and intimately Kipling has blended his æsthetic appreciation of odour and a wonderful knowledge of the soldier is too long to quote in full, but I must call attention to the following lines:

The day closed (after an amazing interlude in the château of a dream, which was all glassy ponds, stately trees, and vistas of white and gold saloons. The proprietor was somebody's chauffeur at the Front, and we drank to his excellent health) at a little village in a twilight full of the petrol of many

\* "France at War," by Rudyard Kipling. *Daily Telegraph*, September 6, 8, 10, 13, 15, 17, 1915.

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cars and the *wholesome flavour of healthy troops*. There is no better guide to camp than one's own thoughtful nose ; and though I poked mine everywhere, in no place then or later did it strike that vile betraying taint of underfed, unclean men. And the same with the horses.

Can any man who has once lived the life of a soldier be deaf to the force of these lines ? Some phrases possess an intense slice of youth and vehemence : try "the wholesome flavour of healthy troops," think it, pronounce it, and you will see in the flash of those words tens of thousands of bronzed soldiers marching. Above the steady champing of the marching feet, you will hear the insolent throbbing and staccato detonations of the drums, and you will smell the odours of the camp : the burning of wood, the cooking of the evening meal, and the fortifying smell of well-cared-for horses.

Yes, Kipling can still handle English words with that contemptuous ease and terseness which appeals to the unpolished soldier, as well as to the bookman in his study.

How often it occurs to us that there is something half physical in the reading of Kipling's books ; it brings to one the same tingling sensation that is to be experienced in walking in the wind and rain. It is a breathless speed and wonder. It does not feel like any deliberate process of settling down to read a book page by page. There is so much freedom in the pages, like the freedom of youth : abandon, audacity, shuddering and horror, splendours and mirth. We feel, when we have once entered into the spirit of such a book as "Kim," expanded, powerful, infinitely alive. We draw deep breaths of the diamond air with the Lama, and the smells of all India rush to our nostrils. It is Kipling's adoration of colour, smell, and action, that accounts for this ; and we do not realize how cunningly the author appeals to the reader's olfactory sense. In spite of all our neglect of the theory of smell, in regard to life and literature, the nose is always active. This must be true, else it would not aid our



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memory and warn us of danger. Here is a subject for which few people feel any curiosity, and yet, consider what illuminating researches are available in regard to it. Owing to our apathy about this subject few people are aware that taste is a very limited sense which only responds to "sweet," "sour," and a few plain nerve-reactions. Often we wrongly credit to taste the action of the olfactory sense. For instance, it is the odour of food that we take pleasure in while we are eating; it is the bouquet of good wine before the taste that is desired—we often confuse the taste and the smell. Thus it is very difficult to distinguish between what we think is the taste of cinnamon, and that of cloves, if the nose is held. We are sorely in need of research in regard to the phenomenon of smell. However, the fact is, that most of the investigation in this direction has been left to animals. Ordinary citizens, even as you and I, remain more ignorant than a dog about it, for it seems that we work from the complex to the simple, and the obvious is the last thing we know. We are so exquisite that we politely deny that there even is such a thing as an individual odour to ourselves and our friends. The student of the dog will tell you that this animal always uses the olfactory organs to confirm his vision. We have all seen a dog make a long and searching nose investigation of his master on meeting him; he is using his keenly sensitive sense of smell to make certain that it is not somebody *just like* his master.

But Kipling has seen that he could not afford to scorn the consideration of this sense. It is remarkable how intimate he has made some of his work with the aid of it. Perhaps, some day, a writer with the vision will arise and arrange all the facts of the sense of smell in real order, and so, suddenly, we shall take one more great step in advance on the great road of life and literature. But we do not seem within measurable distance of the time when this will be accomplished. Ellwood Hendric,

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writing on the olfactory sense in the *Atlantic Monthly*, says : \*

Sir William Ramsay, whose ever-young enthusiasm leads him into so many of the secret gardens of Nature, has found a relation between odour and molecular weight, and J. B. Haycroft has pointed out what appears to be a cousinship of odours that accords with the periodic law ; another notes that odorous substances seem to be readily oxidized, and Tyndall showed that many odorous vapours have a considerable power of absorbing heat. Some work has been done in German, French, and Italian laboratories to discover the nature of the phenomenon of smell, but very little that is definite has been brought out ; only here and there a few facts ; and nobody seems to want to know them.

And yet the scientific possibilities are very fascinating, even if they are bewildering. For instance, it appears that the sensitive region of either nostril is provided with a great number of olfactory nerve-cells embedded in the epithelium. The olfactory cells are also connected by nerves which extend to the brain. Well, what happens when we smell anything ? The olfactory nerve-cells are surrounded by a liquid. What is the nature of that liquid ? Do the particles which we assume to be the cause of olfactory phenomena dissolve in it ? If they do—and here we pray thee, oh, great Arrhenius, come help us !—does dissociation take place, and are there *smell* ions ? That is, do fractions of the molecules of those bodies that give odour dissociate themselves from the rest and ride in an electric stream to the nerves ? What do they do when they get there ?

Of the unsolved problems in regard to the olfactory sense we have enough and to spare. I need not fill these pages with such questions, but it is difficult to understand and explain how a dog can recognize certain emotions through his nose. In "Garm—A Hostage," by Kipling, the reader learns a great deal about the "power of the dog," and it is noticeable that the author believes the animal capable of determining fear, good-will, and anger with his highly developed olfactory organs. How the dog is able to recognize these emotions with the nose becomes clearer when we learn that certain rare and subtle odours are created by nerve-reactions :

\* "The Sense of Smell," *Atalanta Monthly*, March, 1913. To this lucid and searching study of the phenomenon of smell I am indebted for numerous facts in this chapter.

## KIPLING'S DELIGHT IN ODOUR

Now we know that nerve-reactions have at least a chemical accompaniment. Metabolism is often inhibited, the whole digestive process is frequently upset, and there is a fair possibility that the sweat glands are so modified by emotions that their processes are indicative of emotional reactions. The trained nose might recognize this. If we could only advance along this line until we could recognize anger and fear, and possibly even deceit, consider in what measure life would be augmented !

To return to Kipling's story "Garm—A Hostage." This is a discerning study of a dog—a dog that a soldier in a burst of gratitude to a friend, gives away, and finds that he has given away the better part of his life. In one of Doctor Bradley's works he says : " I can remember in Shakespeare scarcely any sign of fondness for an animal. He did not care for dogs, as Homer did ; he even disliked them, as Goethe did. There is no reference, I believe, to the fidelity of the dog in the whole of his works. To all that he loved most in men he was blind in dogs. And, then we call him universal ! " In this particular point, at any rate, Kipling transcends the greatest of all writers, for his passion for the dog knows no restraint. I am afraid that "Garm," the hero of this story, is a dog of impossible virtue and intelligence. This wonderful bull-terrier yields a splendid example of Kipling's method. His enthusiasm for "Garm" leads him to a wonderful, sympathetic caricature which is quite outside the pale of probability. But at the same time he winds his way into the reader's affections, for no one has written so utterly and unreservedly of the mysterious links which bind dog and man in friendship as Rudyard Kipling has.

The whole situation of the story of "Garm" is summed up in a poignantly moving poem :

*Buy a pup and your money will buy  
Love unflinching that cannot lie—  
Perfect passion and worship fed  
By a kick in the ribs or a pat on the head.*



## CHAPTER XIV

### KIPLING'S LONDON DAYS

Villiers Street : The Old Water Gate : Happy and tranquil days of 1891 : Aubrey Beardsley and his theories on drawing : Wilde and "Lord Arthur Savile's Crime" : Stories written by Kipling at Villiers Street : Ink and the Gipsy-caravan : Henri Murger : "The Light that Failed" : "Brugglesmith" : Holywell Street : Mr. Arthur Bartlett Maurice on Kipling's London : St. Clement's Danes : Dr. Johnson : Embankment Chambers and "The Light that Failed" : Bessie Broke : "The Record of Badalia Herodsfoot" : Soho and its odours : Charlie Mears and "The Finest Story in the World" : Richard Le Gallienne and the Strand : Private Ortheris : St. Paul's : "A Matter of Fact" : Gough Square and Johnson.





## CHAPTER XIV

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It would be idle to pretend that Villiers Street is very attractive at the present day ; its glory is of the past, and even the last relics of that past have now almost vanished altogether—obliterated by the astonishingly rapid rush of the tide of bricks and mortar in the last thirty years. Yet 'tis a famous street, for it recalls George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, of whose house at the foot of Buckingham and Villiers Streets only the Water Gate remains. However, the gate is noteworthy not only for its beauty, but as indicating the level of the river before the Embankment was built, when it was washed by the tide. Among famous residents in Villiers Street in past days were John Evelyn (1683-4) and Richard Steele (1721-4). But if you are a Kiplingite, the last door at the bottom of the sloping thoroughfare as you turn your steps towards the river, is the house you will make for. It is numbered "19," and over it in large block letters one reads "Embankment Chambers." It was here that Rudyard Kipling—then "the Man from Nowhere"—took up his quarters when he left India in 1889. But the times have changed since Kipling found Bohemia in Villiers Street. Gatti's Music Hall has now vanished, and a gaudy cinema theatre now stands in its place. The old order changes, giving place to the new. It is with feelings of genuine regret that one thinks of the old happy and tranquil days of the Hansom Cabs, Moore and Burgess Minstrels, and the "marvellous performances" at the Royal Aquarium, which were perhaps the

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last links with the folk-song and folk-dance, maypoles and feasts and beer of our fathers.

It was at the Gatti restaurant in Villiers Street that the oddly garbed, weary-eyed, high priest of morbidity, Aubrey Beardsley, often made his way to meet friends. Three years later he attracted much attention by the depravity of his exquisitely refined decorative genius. Physiologists would no doubt connect his grotesque fancy with the malady which foredoomed him. A friend of mine once pressed Beardsley for his theories on the subject of drawing.

"Why," he asked, "do your men partake of a devil-nature? Why are all your women so sensual, and so wholly graceless?"

Beardsley replied:

"I have no theories on art. None at all. I represent things as I see them—outlined faintly in thin streaks (just like me). I take no notice of shadows, they do not interest me; therefore I feel no desire to indicate them. I am afraid that people appear differently to me than they do to others; to me they are mostly grotesque, and I represent them as I see them. I can say no more. All humanity inspires me. Every passer-by is my unconscious sitter; and, strange as it may seem, I really draw folk as I see them. Surely it is not my fault that they fall into certain lines and angles. I think most people who know anything of the subject will admit that my figures are anatomically correct."

Oscar Wilde, it may be safely inferred, knew Gatti's well, and it will be remembered that his book of stories "Lord Arthur Savile's Crime," was published in the year Kipling came to London. It was from some such spot as the Embankment at the end of Villiers Street that Lord Arthur Savile seized Mr. Podgers by the legs and flung him into the Thames. The idea of the story is that Lord Arthur learns from a palmist that at some period of his life it is decreed that he will commit a

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murder. Wishing to get the matter satisfactorily performed and off his mind once and for all, he tries to kill a charming aunt and a benevolent uncle, and failing in both essays, he walks miserably on the Embankment, where he finds Mr. Podgers the cheiromantist deep in the contemplation of the river. Lord Arthur steals up and tilts Podgers over the parapet—a heavy splash, and all is still. There are some delicate descriptions of London at dawn in this story, and, over the sudden effacement of Podgers, “the moon peered through a mane of tawny clouds, as if it were a lion’s eye, and innumerable stars spangled the hollow vault, like gold-dust powdered on a purple dome.”

Rudyard Kipling must have spent some of his happiest days at Villiers Street. He was free from material care, he was full of physical and mental vigour, and was working at his best. During the time that he spent here he wrote “The Finest Story in the World,” “Brugglesmith,” “The Record of Badalia Herodsfoot,” “At the End of the Passage,” “The Light that Failed,” “The Last Relief,” “For One Night Only,” “Without Benefit of Clergy,” and many other stories and poems. And in going through this work one may often get a glimpse of the dead little London of 1891—a very searching touch which goes clean through one—a curious traffic with shades.

It was in Villiers Street that Kipling for the first time in his life pondered on the great puzzles of existence, as a man penned in by four walls and working overmuch with his brains is likely to do. For those who have true genius and good constitutions the life of ink and the gipsy-caravan is only a debatable land between youth and fame; for others it is a land of enchantment which, as years pass along, gradually turns into a tarnished fairy-land with no outlet. One has only to read the lives of Francois Villon, Gerard De Nerval, and Henri Murger to fully realize this fact. But it may be said of Kipling

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that he knew little of the sordid cares and gay regretful life of the true literary Bohemian. Fame came to him swiftly in London and placed him well beyond the irksome duties of the unknown literary hack.

Perhaps the precarious financial position of Dick Helder in "The Light that Failed" is a memory of Kipling's early days in London, but I venture to state very confidently that he was never in the plight of Henri Murger's hero Randolph, who in winter, when all his furniture had been used as firewood, warmed himself by burning his early poetry, finding "that the third act was much too short." However, it is in the work that came from Kipling's pen while he was quartered in Villiers Street that we find the only shadowy pictures of the tyranny and turmoil of our great Capital that is contained in all his writings. The environment of Charing Cross was a valuable factor in his literary career. You will find it all in "The Light that Failed"—the unknown shores of London, where soul clashes endlessly on soul, and where

*Quests, adventures, vague and far,  
Wonders and wide enchantments are  
Borne on the tireless stream that goes  
From Charing Cross to Temple Bar.*

*Romance lies there with outstretched hand.  
It is a new and faery land  
When I, high on a lurching 'bus,  
Go charioteering down the Strand!*

In that remarkable story, "Brugglesmith," Kipling shows a masterly sense of the genius of places. What could be better than "Holywell Street never goes to bed"? This road was demolished in 1901, and perhaps Kipling's remark will seem obscure when a hundred years have passed. It was also called Booksellers' Row, and was less sacred in its history than in its origin.



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Notorious for its dealings in objectionable literature, it seemed singular that this strange traffic should have centred around the site of a holy spring. Lord Macaulay and Mr. Gladstone were two famous book-lovers who often browsed among the books in the cavernous little shops when Booksellers' Row had purged itself of books of evil savour in later years. Another spring which deserves attention, as we follow M'Phee strapped in the "devil's perambulator" (what a splendid description of a police ambulance) is the old Roman Bath in Strand Lane. It is filled with beautifully clear water from a spring, and is one of the few relics of Roman London. How few Londoners know of its existence!

Mr. Arthur Bartlett Maurice, writing on the comic odyssey "Brugglesmith," has remarked:

It is no indiscretion to speak of it as having been autobiographical, or at least as having had an autobiographical basis, for the simple reason that no human mind could possibly have invented it entirely. The "Breslau," on the deck of which the narrator first fell in with his Old Man of the Sea, and was by turns lauded as "the immortal author of 'Vanity Fair,'" and reviled for his peacock vanity, was lying below London Bridge. In the dinghy the two shot under the bridge, and then on land began the series of extraordinary adventures that carried them to Fleet Street, by the Law Courts near St. Clement's Danes, up and down Holywell Street "which never goes to bed," along the Strand, through Cockspur Street, to Piccadilly Circus, past Apsley House into Knightsbridge—"respectable Knightsbridge"—through Kensington High Street, where the Old Man of the Sea professed to love his captive and guardian as a son, into the Addison Road, and on to the final destination of "Brugglesmith," which was as near as the drink-tied but otherwise embarrassingly eloquent tongue could get to Brook Green, Hammersmith.

It was at St. Clement's Danes, one of the finest of London's churches, that Kipling was chased by the policeman, and a minute and a half seemed as long as a "foot-bound flight of a nightmare." The author remembered the great and god-like man who worshipped there a hundred years before, and thought Dr. Johnson would have felt for him, which reminds us that the

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great lexicographer once, not far from this very spot, gave his arm to 'a lady somewhat in liquor to assist her across the road, upon which he remarked, "She offered me a shilling, supposing me to be the watch man."

Dr. Johnson's pew is at the front of the north gallery of the church. Note also the Johnson window, where we find him amid his friends—a laughable group, for Mr. T. F. Curtis had tried to make the window into a gathering of saints! Mr. Curtis is not so skilled in stained-glass worldliness as he is with stained-glass saintliness!

Embankment Chambers are chiefly associated in Kipling's writings with "The Light that Failed," for here it was that Torpenhow found a studio for Dick—"a big box room really"—in the top storey in the rickety chambers overlooking the Thames. Kipling's descriptions still hold good to-day: "The well of the staircase disappeared into darkness, pricked by tiny gas-jets, and there were sounds of men talking and doors slamming seven flights below, in the warm gloom." From the outside this antique and dismal building depresses one, and it seems that the weight of so many previous lives spent there helps to accentuate this sombreness. The vicinity was aptly characterised by Torpenhow when he remarked that it was not a place he would recommend for a Young Men's Christian Association.

A few yards past the building a passage leads into Victoria Embankment Gardens, passing the beautiful old Water Gate. Kipling's rooms overlooked this little oasis with its steep grass banks and fine statue of Robert Burns, and it was from this window that Torpenhow and Dick, in "The Light that Failed," leaned into the darkness, watching the greater darkness of London below them: "Northward the lights of Piccadilly Circus and Leicester Square threw a copper-







THE GUNNISON STREET OF THE "RECORD  
OF BADALIA HERODSFOOT "

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coloured glare above the black roofs, and southward lay all the orderly lights of the Thames."

Looking at the two solid doors leading into Embankment Chambers, the more than usually sentimental pilgrim may think he identifies the hall into which Bessie Broke staggered, and fell into the arms of Torpenhow. Bessie came from somewhere over Lambeth Road way—"south the water—one room,—five and sixpence a week"—and was a typical girl of the street. "Poor little wretch! Look at that face!" remarked Dick. "There isn't an ounce of immorality in it. Only folly—slack, fatuous, feeble, futile folly." But little did Dick imagine the terrible blow that Bessie would deal out to him later on. Like all her sisters through fiction and life, she played the part of the she-cat to the last. Perhaps Villon came as near to communicating the character of Bessie in a few words as any writer :

*swift and white,  
And subtly warm, and half perverse,  
And sweet like sharp soft fruit to bite,  
And like a snake's love lithe and fierce.*

Many people have imagined that the background of "The Record of Badalia Herodsfoot" was to be sought for in Whitechapel or Limehouse, but Mr. Arthur Bartlett Maurice pointed out in *The Bookman* that Gunnison Street was in the Soho region, "a sinister little alley that winds and twists close by Seven Dials." I have not yet been able to trace this, but Mr. Maurice, like all true Americans, knows his London better than any Cockney, and has backed up his statement with a photograph of Badalia's environment.

It is a curious thing that Kipling, with his astonishingly keen sense of smell, should have almost ignored this most poignant of all our emotions in his London stories. What a splendid chance he had in the "Record of Badalia Herodsfoot" to bring in the individuality of the million

and one subtle odours of the great metropolis. Take the myriad smells of Berwick Street at night-time. It is a narrow bazaar-like thoroughfare, lined with a thousand stalls, and one might almost imagine it was the "straight street" of Damascus at moments when encountering dark-eyed Oriental-looking girls—for this is the real Jewish quarter of the West End. And permeating all is the smell! The flitting ghost of odours, subtle with suggestions of a hundred cities! Turmeric, peppers, and Egyptian cigarettes conjure up the old Mouski at Cairo. The mysterious warm cooking smells of Old Compton Street, with an occasional whiff of garlic, are rich in their associations with Continental pilgrimages. How long are the smells of London to lack a champion?

Nor should one forget Charlie Mears, the bank clerk on twenty-five shillings a week, who often climbed up the seven flights of stairs at Embankment Chambers. Charlie, acting under ancestral compulsion, placed in Kipling's hands, with a profligate abundance of detail, stories of adventure, riot, piracy, and death on unnamed seas. And while Charlie roams through the fields of ether, and "swings the earth a trinket at his wrist," Kipling is smitten with a sudden fear that something might come to the boy which would kill remembrance. The flaming colours of an Aquarium poster caught the author's eye, and he wondered whether it would be wise to lure the boy into the power of a professional mesmerist, and thus obtain further secrets of his past lives. But Charlie, who knew all things, and stood at the door of the world's treasure-house, falls under the fascination of a girl with a "curly head and a foolish slack mouth," and the Lords of Life and Death shut the doors of his memory lest he should remember other and more beautiful wooings in long past years. That is the reason the finest story in the world was never written.

At times Stanley Ortheris felt that sudden and inexplicable hunger for London which is common to all

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exiled sons of the great city. Its huge presence, as of some living, sentient thing, loomed upon his mind, and dwarfed every other longing desire. Whether you love London or hate it (and you can do both), the magic spell seems to be the same. To realize it you must leave London, as Stanley Ortheris did, and then you may with him feel the irresistible heart-hunger for the Strand lights. It is to Richard Le Gallienne that we owe the "Ballad of London," in which we catch the alluring glare of "the iron lilies of the Strand."

*Ah, London ! London ! our delight,  
Great flower that opens but at night,  
Great City of the Midnight Sun,  
Whose day begins when day is done.*

*Lamp after lamp against the sky  
Opens a sudden beaming eye,  
Leaping alight on either hand,  
The iron lilies of the Strand.*

*Ah, London ! London ! our delight,  
For thee, too, the eternal night,  
And Circe Paris hath no charm  
To stay Time's unrelenting arm.*

*Time and his moths shall eat up all.  
Your charming towers proud and tall  
He shall most utterly abase,  
And set a desert in their place.*

In the following lines Kipling has suggested much of the psychology and some of the biography of No. 22639 Private Ortheris :

No. I'm sick to go 'ome—go 'ome—go 'ome. No, I ain't mammy sick, cause my uncle brung me up, but I'm sick for London again ; sick for the sounds of 'er, and the sights of 'er, and the stinks of 'er ; orange peel and hasphalt, and gas coming in over Vau'all Bridge. Sick for the rail going down to Box 'Ill with your gal on your knee, and a new clay

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pipe in your faice ; that and the Stran' lights where you knows every one, and the copper that taikes you in is a old friend that tuk you up before when you was a little smitchy boy lying loose between the Temple and the dark Harches.

Round about Gracechurch Street, London Bridge, and St. Paul's—

*Remote from all the City's moods,  
In high, untroubled solitudes,  
Like an old Buddha swathed in dream.*

Charlie Mears, in his latter incarnation as a bank clerk, roamed on his round with a bill-book chained to his waist. It was in passing over the Thames with the author that some chord within him was touched by the smell of tar, piled-up deals, and barges, and changed him from a bank clerk to some unknown and audacious sea-wolf. The bellows of a lonely ship's cow in a barge made Charlie skip a half-dozen existences and dimly remember an episode in the days of the Vikings :

*When they heard our bulls bellow the Skroelings ran away !*

The age and spell of London appears in "A Matter of Fact," where we are shown the effect produced on an American visiting the city for the first time :

That afternoon I walked him abroad and about, over the streets that run between the pavements like channels of grooved and tongued lava, over the bridges that are made of enduring stone, through subways floored and sided with yard-thick concrete, between houses that are never rebuilt and by river-steps hewn, to the eyes, from the living rock. A black fog chased us into Westminster Abbey. I could hear the wings of the dead centuries circling round the head of Litchfield A. Keller, journalist of Dayton, Ohio, U.S.A., whose mission it was to make the Britishers sit up.

Mr. Bartlett Maurice has pointed out that

Fleet Street, too, is of the tales, even when it is not actually in the tales. As an institution rather than a street it was in the mind of Rudyard



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Kipling who lived in the Embankment Chambers, just as it had been in the mind of Thackeray when, some forty years before, he penned that famous descriptive chapter of "Pendennis." Between the lines of "The Light that Failed" the presses whirl and crash as they whirled and crashed in the heat of an Indian night at the beginning of "The Man Who Would Be King." In the direction of Fleet Street Dick Helder disappeared with hot anger and grim resolve. Fleet Street was as the breath of their nostrils to Torpenhow and the Nilghai and all the rest of the war correspondents, who, in the strange lost version of the story, not to be confounded with either the happy ending or the unhappy ending, gathered to sing to the falling curtain Julia Howe's "Battle Hymn of the Republic."

So we will take leave of Kipling the Londoner in Fleet Street; but before departing we should make a point of looking over Dr. Johnson's house at 17, Gough Square, which has been preserved as a museum for Johnson lore and relics. Johnsonians are allowed to give tea-parties here, and the idea of tea with the great ghosts, while all around the gaping presses vociferate with throats of steel, seems to me a very fit and proper ending to a literary pilgrimage.

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